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The American BOOK TRADE JOURNAL

VOL. CXIII

NEW YORK, MAY 26, 1928

No. 21

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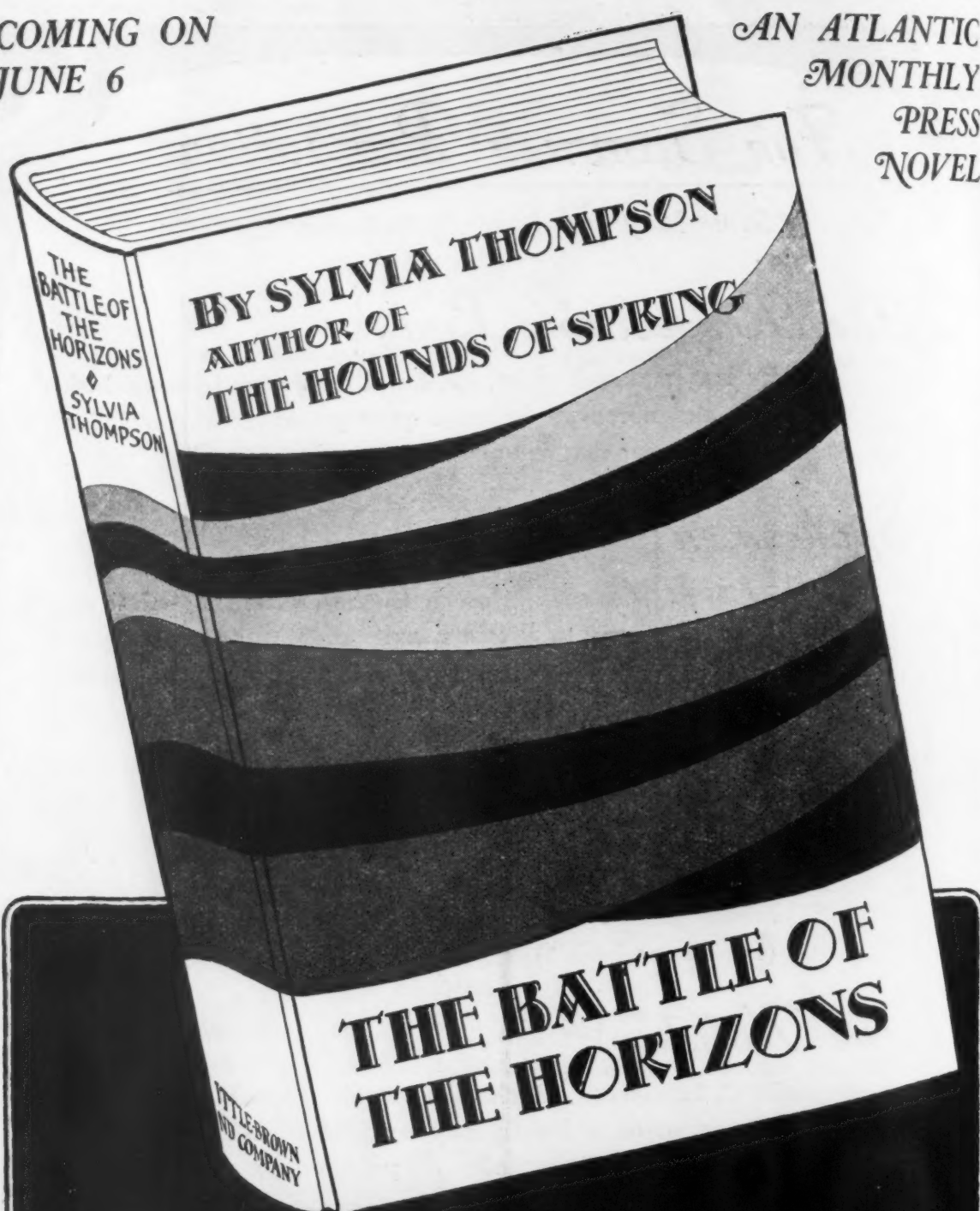
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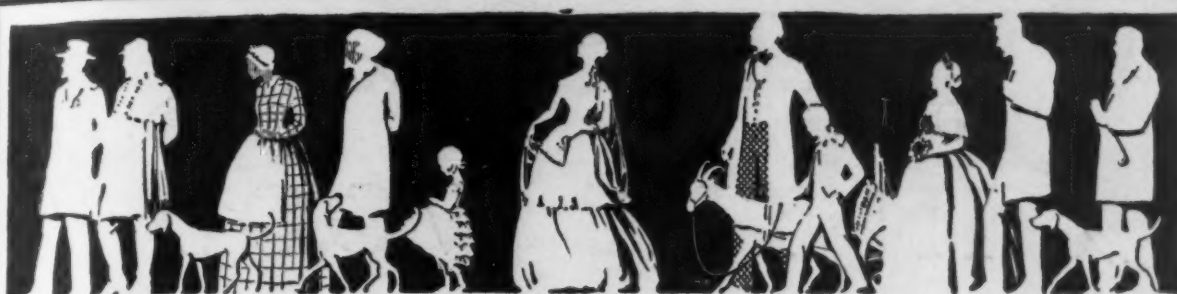
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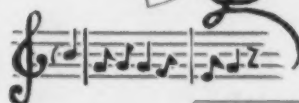


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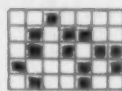
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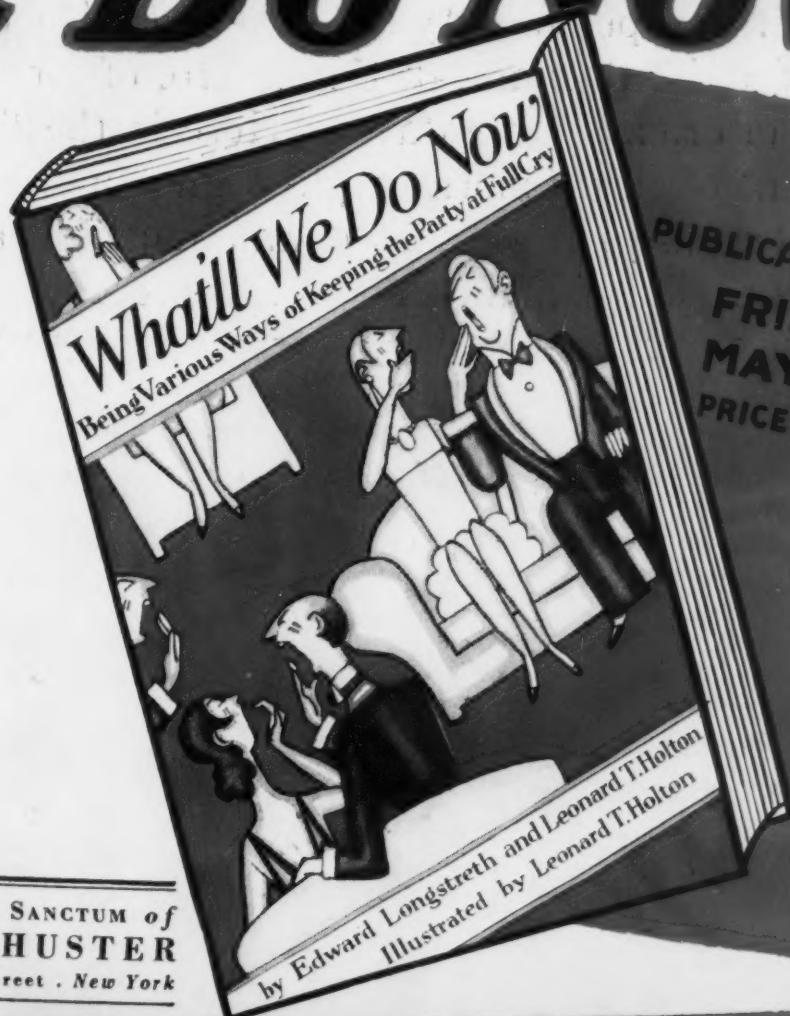
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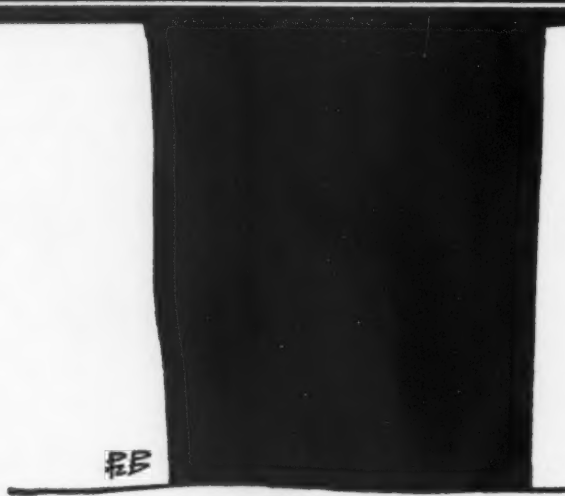
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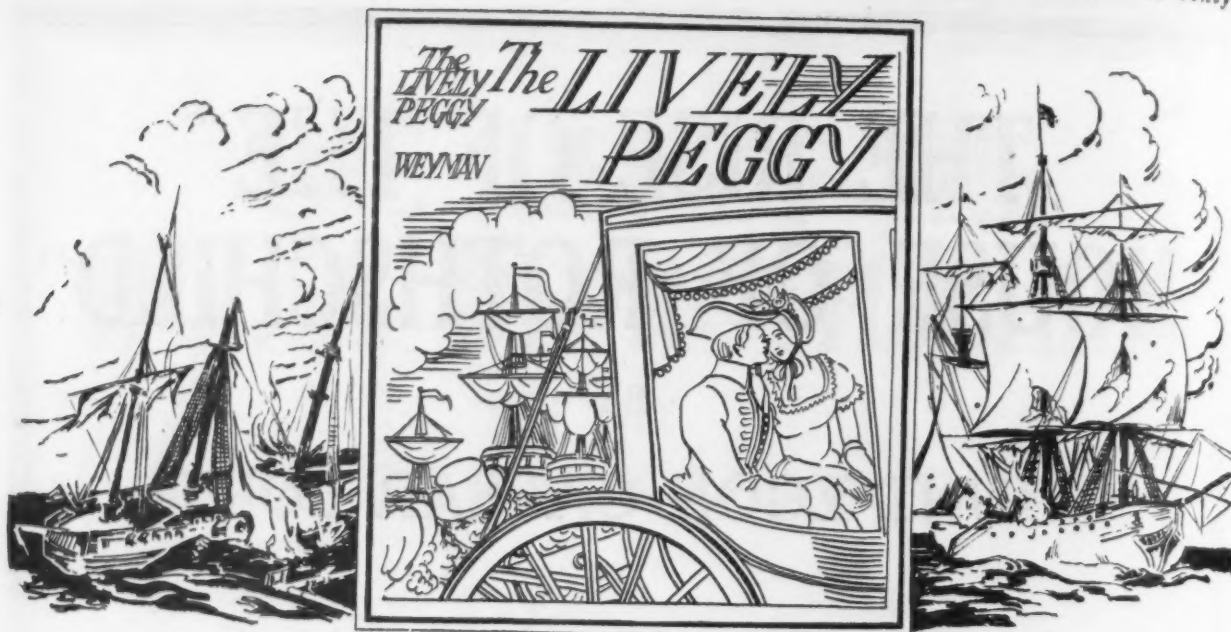
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April			
1st week	114 copies	May (advertising starts)	
2nd week	195 copies	1st week	757 copies
3rd week	465 copies	2nd week	<u>1403 copies</u>
4th week	<u>140 copies</u>		2160 copies
	914 copies		

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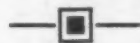
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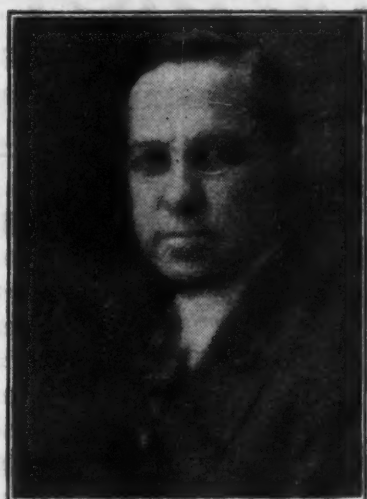
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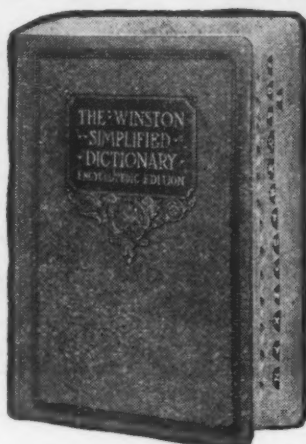
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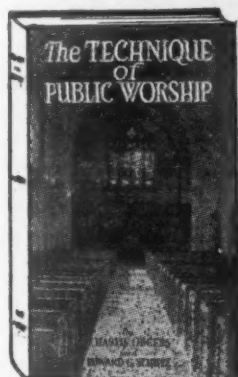
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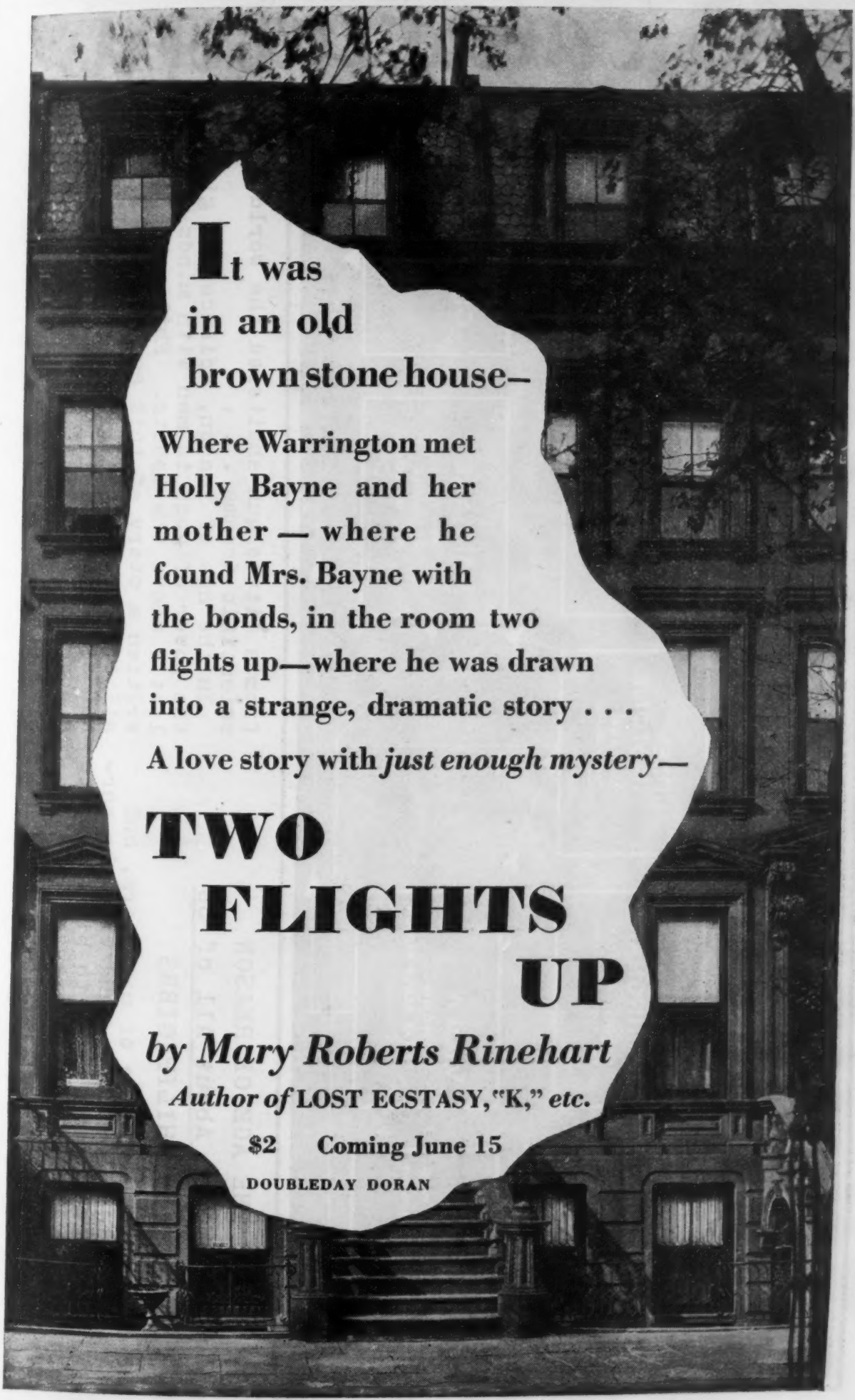
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mother — where he  
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flights up—where he was drawn  
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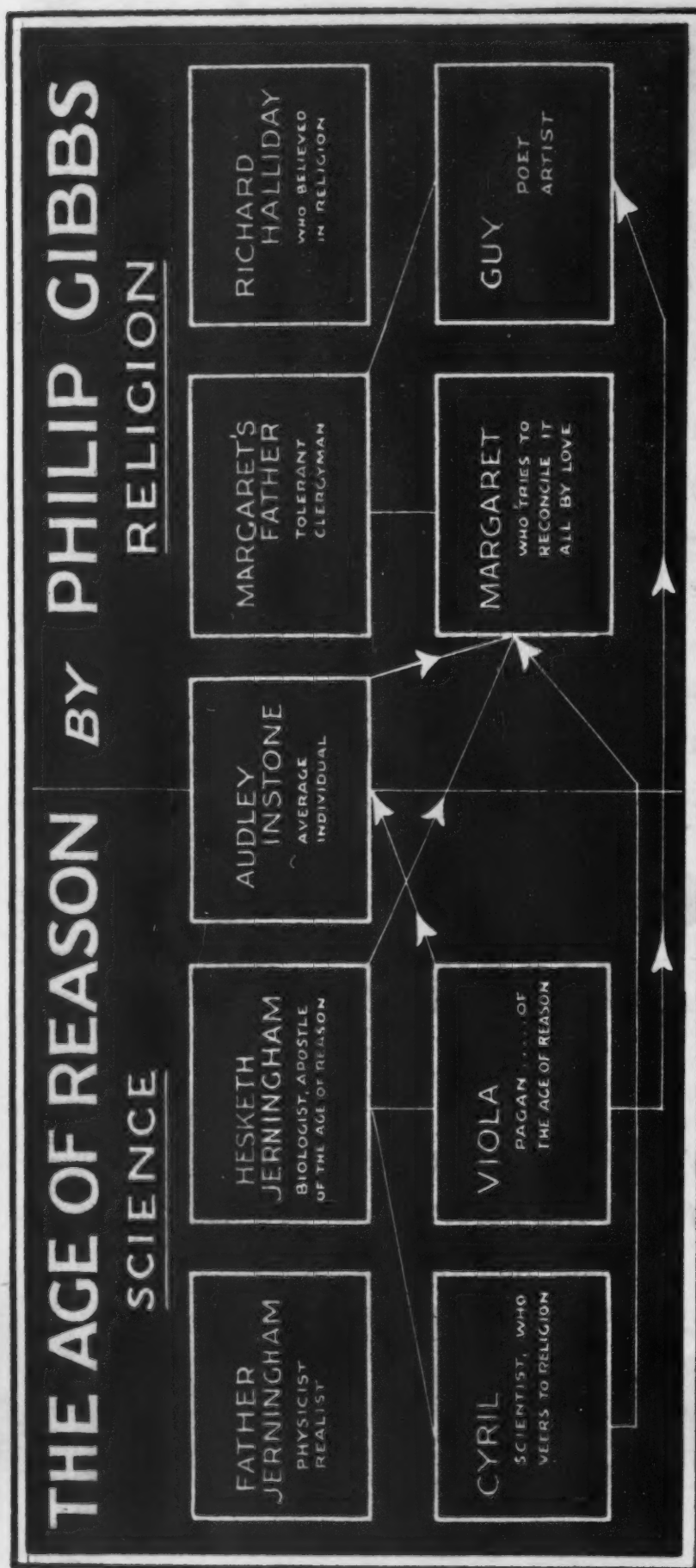
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THE AMERICAN BOOK-TRADE JOURNAL

NEW YORK, MAY 26, 1928

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Atlantic City, May 14-17, 1928

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### MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION, MAY 14

GEORGE W. JACOBS : On behalf of Joseph W. Lippincott I present to the Association a gavel which is inscribed, "Wood from the flag pole, Independence Hall, 1876," and certified to by the Historian of the Centennial.

PRESIDENT KIDD : Mr. Jacobs, on behalf of the Association I want to thank Mr. Lippincott and yourself for his great courtesy, and yours.

I believe and hope that this convention

will be one of the most outstanding that we have had. Last year we followed a plan of waiting on certain phases that were before us for the simple reason that we didn't think it good policy to start something that we might not be able to finish. Now we are more secure in our position, our ideas have been crystallized, and we intend insofar as possible, individually and as an Association, to take such measures as may be found necessary to protect our interests.

# The President's Address

John G. Kidd

*Stewart Kidd, Cincinnati*

WE have been passing thru the most important decade in the history of retail bookselling. During this period there have been great changes in the public buying habit and we have had enormous growth in retail outlets for books. There is the growth of the chain bookstore; the increase in department store bookselling; the huge increase in mail order distribution with national publicity campaigns; the circulating library and those drug stores carrying books all adding to the sales outlets. This has increased reading and greatly stimulated book sales. During this period the American Booksellers' Association has gone ahead correspondingly. From transacting practically all its business on the basis of an annual meeting, the A. B. A. has come to function every working day.

As each year passes the Association assumes a more and more important place in the business of bookselling. Not only do most of the retailers recognize this, altho they do not always support the Association, but the publishers as well. The unity of these booksellers means a power that must be reckoned with and I tell you frankly unless you do support the Association to your utmost you will have no protection against the nefarious practices of advertising price cutters, and you will again have to face the deplorable condition that existed in the trade at the beginning of this century before the establishment of net price system. Then there were not a dozen retailers in the United States able to meet their obligations promptly; there were fewer than a thousand stores selling books in the whole country and these rapidly were disappearing, for there was absolutely no money to be made. At that time the trade was forced to sell all kinds of junk to keep alive. We do not want to go thru that again. Therefore, to build our business and protect our interests we must stand together and fight those who

are attacking the foundation stone of book progress, "The Maintained Price."

A bookseller who fears legitimate competition is simply afraid of himself. Superior brain and business capacity, rightly administered, have always dominated a situation in the business world and always will. Bookselling like every other line of merchandising is in a constant state of evolution and booksellers have not opposed these changes, but rather have taken advantage of the many new opportunities of intensive selling. No one can object to the newer forms of distribution even tho they may be widely advertised. But we must object, if we are to survive, to such competitors as The Literary Guild whose huge advertising campaign is devoted exclusively to featuring books at one-half the published price and to trying in various ways to discredit the bookseller by cynically unfair and viciously misleading attacks in nationwide publicity. This advertising advises the customer against risking an unwise purchase in the bookshop when the best twelve books out of ten thousand (selected of course by its Editorial Board) may be had by merely sending in a signed coupon, thus saving the reader from any chance of using his own good judgment in the selection of books. This advertising pleasantly calls our bookselling "the antiquated system of distribution and selling of books," informing the public we have stood still for a hundred years—"you may be willing to pay \$2.50 for a book that has no permanent value but not many others can afford to"—"people who live in the bright sunshine" of modern life do not care to stay in the dark ages of book buying." What a slam at the public! I say this kind of competition is as menacing to the booktrade as it is misleading to the public. Publishers and retailers alike will suffer unless effective measures are taken to prevent its spread.

Thus far our principal and only pro-



*Frederic Melcher, Richard Fuller, Harry Korner and John Kidd*

tection has been those reputable publishers who are unwilling to be seduced by large orders into the betrayal of their retail distributors; who feel that it's unsound business to have their books advertised at one-half the published price even tho "the American public by the thousands are accepting the free service offered by this great innovation in book publishing," and who are not willing to divulge months in advance their business plans tho the group may be intimately in contact with the publishing world as is the "Editorial Board named in the box." Of course, there is an indication that at some future date we shall be protected by the passing of such bills as S-1418 and HR-11 which are the latest presented by Senator Capper and Congressman Kelly.

I have just had an opportunity of seeing the *Congressional Record* in which there is a speech by the Hon. Clyde Kelly, and I will read you one thing he has to say: "I am willing to rest my case on the principle that public policy requires that independent business men of full age and

competent understanding have the right to contract to uphold a uniform price policy on standard goods, and that such contract entered into freely and voluntarily shall be held good, and shall be enforced in the courts of justice."

That is absolutely good. I think that is what we all want, and what the trade needs.

Now at the end of my two years as President of your Association I must express my very sincere appreciation and gratitude for the loyal support you have given me. To the officers and members of the various committees I am doubly grateful for their efficient help and willingness to serve. The Board of Trade and its excellent chairman this past year have been confronted with many serious problems which required great effort and time to solve. Their detailed report will help you understand the difficulties they have faced.

To your Executive Secretary, a man with real imagination who is a great asset to the Association, an indomitable worker absolutely devoted to the cause, who has



a keen understanding of Association business and a determination to help place the A. B. A. at the head of the list where it belongs. One of his many valuable ideas endorsed by the Board of Trade and a number of representative booksellers is the monthly BookSelection plan which will be presented at this convention. To his report particular attention should be paid for the many important facts concerning the A. B. A.

Your Treasurer, Stanley Remington, with the large increase of Association business this past year deserves a real vote of thanks for the splendid and efficient manner in which he has handled the Association finances. Considering the broad scope of our activities it will be for a time at least increasingly difficult to finance the A. B. A. unless we have a larger membership in which case the dues will go a long way toward relieving the situation. We want you all to use the Clearing House to the limit of your capacity and for those who are delinquent in sending their dues we ask that a prompt remittance be made.

Another man I must thank, one who has been sitting on the financial lid, so to speak. I refer to Harry V. Korner your able Secretary who has in spite of being a very busy bookseller found time to check my many requisitions as they were passed for payment.

Neither must I forget to thank the Jacobs, father and son, for their very effective teamwork—George W. Jacobs as chairman in charge of the splendid program, which I am sure you will agree is one of the best we have had, and Howard Jacobs who is chairman of the Entertainment and Banquet Committee a most difficult job I can assure you.

A great improvement has been made in the Clearing House of the American Booksellers' Association by its recent move to Ninth Street and University Place (the third location since its establishment) where the new quarters, much larger and more commodious, are better in every way. The Executive Secretary's report will give you in detail the growth and progress made this last year by the center which, in addition to handling a large proportion of the members' shipments, has also added a publishers' stockroom and is now serving at a profit some ten or a dozen publishers.

The development of this feature is most desirable and of course is in line with the consolidated warehouse idea. If adhered to and developed it will finally mean the establishment of a book center in one building for both publishers and booksellers.

It is to be hoped in the near future the educational program proposed in connection with the Federal Board may be worked out successfully. So far it has been impossible to secure a representative attendance. The plans now call for a meeting, and I sincerely hope that all those who are asked will be able to attend. It, too, will be a book center activity.

While in Paris this spring, thru the courtesy of the managing director, I had the pleasure of examining thoroly the Maison du Livre Français, a most effective organization for the distribution of books. Tho not established until 1920 it occupies a city block and is used by the entire French trade. May the time come and shortly when the American Booksellers' Association will have reached a point at which it too may serve the retail booksellers in as comprehensive a manner. The Atlantic City number of the *Publishers' Weekly* just delivered to you has an editorial in which there are four helpful suggestions for the conduct of our meetings which, if followed, will greatly benefit the convention. I hope these suggestions may be followed.

For the twenty-ninth year of the Association activities I hope we will attain an even greater unity of purpose and in doing this:

- 1st. We exert every effort in developing a wider distribution and reading of books.
- 2nd. Continue to fight unabatedly for a maintenance of resale price.
- 3rd. As individuals cooperate more effectively with the publishers.
- 4th. Strive for a uniform discount of 40%.
- 5th. Maintain absolutely all publication dates.
- 6th. Establish ourselves on a more friendly basis with our business competitors.
- 7th. Finally, devote ourselves to an increasingly successful operation of the Clearing House, which in our co-operative efforts will unite our interests as an Association, thereby

strengthening our value to the public and to our profession as booksellers.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is my report, but in addition I have one other thing to discuss with you that I think is quite important. On the 25th of April I received from Harold K. Guinzburg a letter suggesting that for the welfare of the trade and for the elimination of this contentious feeling between the bookseller and the Guild, he would be very glad indeed to have a meeting in New York with me if possible. To me it was an absolutely sincere letter, and I was so impressed with it that I called a meeting. As to the result, I will read what I have written down here:

"On April 25th your President received a letter from Mr. Harold Guinzburg, of The Literary Guild, in which he expressed a sincere desire to straighten out the relationship between themselves and the book-trade, and altho the Guild has repeatedly attacked the bookstores because, as Mr. Guinzburg has said, it was the cheapest way to get orders, and altho I had never for the Association or myself made any promises whatsoever, I still felt, without changing our attitude in the slightest, it was worth a final meeting. Accordingly I called some of the representative booksellers and publishers together for an informal conference at the *Publishers' Weekly* office last Saturday morning. Those attending were: Henry Hoyns, *Harper Brothers*; Whitney Darrow, *Charles Scribner's Sons*; Alfred R. McIntyre, *Little, Brown Company*; Alfred Harcourt, *Harcourt, Brace & Company*; Benjamin H. Ticknor, *Houghton Mifflin Company*; Max Schuster, *Simon & Schuster*; Stanley M. Rinehart, Jr., *Doubleday, Doran Company*; Alexander Grosset, *Grosset & Dunlap*; Frederic Melcher, *Publishers' Weekly*; Arthur Brentano, Jr., *Brentano's*; Richard F. Fuller, *Old Corner Bookstore*; Edwin I. Hyke, *Stix, Baer and Fuller*; Harry Korner, *Korner and Wood Company*; Ellis W. Meyers, *Exec. Sec. A. B. A.*; John Kidd, *Stewart Kidd Co.*

For the Literary Guild: Harold Guinzburg.

In passing, I can say that the Guild was very well represented.

In making this selection, you see, there were some publishers, who stood fast and supported the trade, and also some who

supplied the Guild with books, so that all sides could be discussed. In other words, this seemed to me like the last gesture, and the very least we could do as open-minded booksellers was to give the Guild one more trial to see if there really was anything possible that could be done that might eliminate some of this ill-feeling.

The outcome of this meeting was the general feeling among the members there that we should have a smaller working committee. Therefore, I appointed:

To represent the Booksellers: Richard F. Fuller, Harry V. Korner.

To represent the publishers: Alfred R. McIntyre, *Little, Brown & Company*; Stanley Rinehart, *Doubleday, Doran & Company*.

Mr. Guinzburg was to bring his advertising man with him, and, as a sort of fifth wheel, we were to have an independent advertising man. With this committee I thought that every phase would be discussed, and if there were any points that could possibly be brought up in favor of the plan as outlined, they would come out.

Now that we are down here, I understand that Mr. Fuller and Mr. Korner and Mr. Guinzburg and the others will get together and see what the plans of the Guild are.

However, in doing this, I am not ceasing at all to fight the Guild type of price-cutting until some definite arrangements have been made that will be entirely satisfactory to the committee and to your Executive Board. In other words, any findings of this committee, before any definite action is taken, will have to be acted on by the Board of Trade and then submitted to the booksellers. In doing this I think that we have taken care of our interests, at the same time not letting down in our attitude against this price-cutting, and I believe if there is any honesty or any justice in this group that we will find them, and it may work out to the profit of all concerned.

Too often publishers have—at least casually, I don't suppose they intended to, nor have they expressed themselves officially—but casually they have indicated that we were a narrow-minded crowd of people, that we were never interested in a new movement, that our whole plan of business was narrow from start to finish. I say we are not narrow-minded. Without throw-



ing any bouquets at this group individually or as an Association, we are just as broad-minded as anybody in the business; and we are just as anxious to make money. Therefore, we are going to do all we can to protect our business that has taken us so many years to build up.

When I started in as a young man in the bookselling game, I went to work for the J. K. Gill Company out in Portland, Oregon. This was back in 1898. They had just failed. Two years later (I don't know whether it was on account of my going there) they failed again. There were failures over the country for five or six years, and then along came the grand old pioneer of the business, W. B. Clarke of Boston, who fought this price-cutting business tooth and nail; and he was a thorn in the flesh of everybody who didn't give a whoop. He razzed the publishers until finally thru his efforts and the support he received, we then got price maintenance, which was the greatest thing that ever happened to the trade. It has resulted in this—that the business of bookselling is on a much higher plane, more intelligent people are getting into it, more people want to get into it because they can make a very

decent living. It is becoming a nice business to be in.

Getting back to the question of compromise with the Guild, if there is any plan that can protect our business which can be evolved, I am absolutely for it, and what I want from you is an endorsement, not of any plans, but merely an endorsement in my selection of the men. Dick Fuller—you know what a hard egg he is; he comes from New England, and he is not ashamed to express himself. Harry Korner is one of the cleverest men in the business. While he is very mild and courteous, if he says "No," he means "No," and any salesmen that are here will absolutely back that up. Alfred McIntyre is a publisher that has made a success. He is a clever business man, and he is broad-minded at the same time. Stanley Rinehart has not been in the publishing business quite as long, but he comes from a smart family, he is in a big concern, and a successful concern. With that group of men, and the independent intelligence that we will get from the advertisers, something worth while should come of it, if nothing more, a demonstration to the publishers that in this business we are absolutely a unit.

## Treasurer's Report, May, 1927-28

Stanley G. Remington

Balance in Bank, May 10, 1927 ..... \$864.18

### RECEIPTS MAY, 1927, TO MAY, 1928

Certificates of Deposit Cashed .....	\$1,500.00	
Interest on Certificates of Deposit Cashed .....	24.99	
Loans from Bank .....	6,100.00	
Liberty Bonds Coupons Cashed .....	127.50	
From Frank Magel, Chairman of Entertainment Committee 1927 Convention .....	1,411.99	
Miscellaneous Refunds on Bills Paid .....	316.22	
From Membership Dues .....	8,447.50	
From Users of Clearing House Service .....	10,538.71	
From Users of Consolidated Warehouse Service .....	6,587.68	
From Sale of Gas Radiators .....	40.00	
From Sale of Mats, Dodgers, Electros and Book-racks .....	1,392.38	\$36,486.97
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS .....</b>		<b>\$37,351.15</b>



May 26, 1928

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# DISBURSEMENTS MAY, 1927-28

Convention Expense 1927, Reporting, Stenographic Work, Telegrams, Gifts, etc. ....	\$353.34	
Traveling Account .....	535.31	
Printing Account—Including All Bulletins, Roster and Officers' Stationery, etc. ....	1,475.14	
President's Office—Stenographic, Postage, etc. ...	81.80	
Treasurer's Office—Stenographic, Postage, etc. ...	330.82	
Treasurer's Bond .....	12.50	
Entertainment Committee 1928 .....	100.00	
Board of Trade Account .....	100.00	
Refund to Univ. Book Shop, Seattle, C. H. Service not used .....	24.20	
Refund to L. C. Hutson, Overpayment .....	1.74	
Loans from Bank Paid .....	4,300.00	
Interest on Loans from Bank .....	69.95	\$7,384.80

## Executive Secretary's Office:

Rent .....	465.00	
Salaries, Stenographer and Office Boy .....	1,508.20	
Postage .....	430.41	
Stationery, Telegrams, Carfare, etc. ....	307.49	
Executive Secretary's Salary .....	4,100.00	
Moving Expense .....	10.00	
Furniture .....	88.14	
Gas Heating Units .....	118.40	
Addressing, Stencils, etc. ....	74.25	
Telephone .....	131.05	
Plate Glass Insurance .....	57.83	\$7,290.77

\$14,675.57 \$37,351.15

## Clearing House and Warehouse Expense:

Salaries, Packing Material, Rent, Light and Heat, Cases, Cartage, Freight and Postage.	\$20,686.07	
Telephone .....	131.04	
Paid for Parcels lost and damaged .....	163.11	
Insurance .....	124.27	
Pyro Glass Products .....	100.45	
Advertising, Advertising Advice, Making Mats and Electros, Plates, etc. ....	949.31	\$22,154.25

Total Cost of Operations ..... \$36,829.82 \$37,351.15

Cash in Bank May 10, 1928 .. \$521.33

## ASSETS MAY 10, 1928

U. S. Liberty Bonds 4½% Par Value .....	\$3,000.00	
Less Loans from Bank .....	1,800.00	\$1,200.00
Cash in Bank at Baltimore .....		521.33
Cash in Bank at New York .....		1,500.00
Uncashed Coupons .....		21.25
Accounts Receivable due from users of Clearing House and Consolidated Warehouse (all good)		1,965.40
Material on Hand, Cash Value .....		400.00
		<hr/>
		\$5,607.98

STATEMENT OF BANK as of May 10, 1928  
Checks out not listed on Bank Statement May 10,  
1928:

\$1,370.83

Check No. 475, Voucher No. ....	8.50		
Check No. 476, Voucher No. 259 .....	508.00		
Check No. 477, Voucher No. 258 .....	333.00	849.50	\$521.33

ANALYSIS OF CLEARING HOUSE and  
Consolidated Warehouse Operations to May  
19, 1928 .....

\$22,154.25

less Accounts Receivable .....	1,965.40	
less Furniture, Fixtures and Material .....	770.00	
less From Users of Clearing House Service.	10,538.71	
less From Users of Consolidated Warehouse	6,587.68	
less From Sale of Radiators .....	40.00	
less From Sale of Mats, Dodgers, etc .....	1,392.38	
less From Cash deposit in New York .....	600.00	21,894.17

Net loss to May 19, 1928 .....		\$260.08
Cash discount for year .....	34.64	

## COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF ASSETS FOR FIVE YEARS

Net Assets at end of each Fiscal  
Year including bonds, dues col-  
lected, etc. ....

	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28
Dues Collected from Membership.	\$5,696	\$8,089	\$6,263	\$5,364	\$5,607
	4,910	5,710	5,310	7,929	8,447

MEMBERSHIP .....	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
	720	745	818	786	741

New Members Since Last Convention .....	36
Lost thru death and going out of Business .....	6
Resignations .....	45
Dropped for non-payment of dues .....	30
Total Loss .....	81

We have 135 Users of Clearing House Service.

We have 10 Users of Consolidated Warehouse Service.

Last Convention we reported only 80 Users of Clearing House and no Consolidated.  
Note the increase in one year.

May 26, 1928

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Regarding the audit this year of the Treasurer's report, we thought it wise not to take the time of any members of the Association to go over all these figures. Last year it took three days and two nights. We have employed the services of Mr. Volmer, who is recommended by the hotel, to audit the books, and he will have a report for us which will be read on Thursday morning.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I am sure that you will all agree that the record of the Association for the past year is remarkably good. I might say concerning one of the figures

that Mr. Remington gave you, that of the resignation of 45 members—about 75 per cent of those were publishers and their representatives, so that the falling off of the bookseller is confined chiefly to those who didn't pay their dues.

If there is no objection the report of the Treasurer will be accepted and his books referred to the Auditing Committee. (No objection.) For the Auditing Committee to take over the work that is already done, I will appoint:

*Auditing Committee:* Ben Sanford, chairman; M. B. Gottlieb, Ralph Wilson.



*Mrs. and Mr. John A. Holden of the Publishers' Weekly, Mrs. and Mr. Theodore Schulte of New York City, and Miss Moon, Allen's Bookshop of Auburn, New York*



# THE Publishers' Weekly

The American BOOK TRADE JOURNAL

Founded by F. Leyboldt

EDITORS

R. R. BOWKER F. G. MELCHER  
62 W. 45th St., New York City

Subscription, Zones 1-5 \$5; Zones 6-8 \$5.50; Foreign \$6  
15 cents a copy

May 26, 1928

*I HOLD every man a debtor to his profession, from the which, as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto.*

—BACON.

## A Successful Booksellers' Convention

THERE was a sense of solidarity and confidence in the atmosphere of the Atlantic City Convention of the American Booksellers' Association which promises well for future trade progress and gives assurance of national support to the new president, Arthur Brentano, Jr. Attendance at a resort cannot be expected to be as large as in a large city, but there were over three hundred present, many from distant places.

Three outstanding booksellers were elected to the Honorary Fellowship: Stanley Remington of Baltimore, Paul Elder of San Francisco and Eugene L. Herr of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

A full report of the convention is printed in the current issue of *Publishers' Weekly*, the reports of officers, important speeches and the resolutions of the business meeting. It was the intention of the Program Committee to bring to the convention the business counsel of leading writers on store problems, on advertising, on buying, on merchandising, etc. These speakers were able to throw real light on retailing.

President Kidd may be congratulated on the results of his two years of service, and the members expressed their appreciation

and regard in a presentation of a watch on the final evening. The Literary Guild and its attack on bookstores was a chief subject of discussion and there seemed to be a hope at the time the convention closed that Mr. Guinzburg of the Guild might change his plans to reduce the friction.

The College Book Association, meeting simultaneously, showed increased strength and interest, as did the special Section of the Religious Booktrade. The Round Table meetings were again of real value in crystallizing opinion.

## A. B. A. Plan for BookShopping and BookSelection

A PLAN for cooperative publicity for bookstores as developed by the discussions in the A. B. A. and presented at the Atlantic City Convention includes two supplementary ideas, the emphasis on "bookshopping" and the plan of a monthly "bookselection."

The purposes of such a dual campaign are concisely redescribed for readers of *Publishers' Weekly* by Franklin Spier who has been working with Ellis Meyers in developing the details of such a program for consideration by the booktrade.

The plan is to increase the sale of books in retail stores by a cooperative, national advertising campaign designed to sell the "bookshopping" habit to those who are not regular buyers of books.

It will take advantage of the increasing interest in books and reading and direct it into regular bookstore channels.

It will stress the pleasure of personal selection, not only as a means of securing books most likely to interest the purchaser, but, in itself, as a thrilling game for intelligent people. It will present the advantage of the bookseller's wide variety of offerings to the prospective purchaser, and the service that the bookseller renders as an individual and a member of the community.

By inference and by positive presentation of the bookstore's unique function, it can set up a wall of propaganda against cut-rate or mail order buying; but it will seek to take advantage of new buying habits as developed by the so-called book clubs and turn them to the retailer's profit, rather

than make any destructive attack upon them.

The monthly BookSelection has two purposes behind it:

1. To give point to the general book-shopping argument by emphasizing a worthy and representative "sample"; to excite interest in all books by dramatizing the interest of the one book; by judicious selection to draw to the bookstore and the bookshopping idea certain groups of the public who are not now aware that books are written and published which might be of interest and value to them.

2. To supply the funds needed for the campaign.

The *BookSelections* are to be made by a committee of experienced buyers, whose choice will be approved by critics, librarians, nationally known figures in public affairs, and others whose names can be used in the advertising.

The publishers will be asked to submit proofs and manuscripts several months in advance of publication. It is assumed that each publisher will, in his desire to obtain the benefit of the nation-wide publicity which will attach to the BookSelection, do his own editorial weeding out and will submit manuscripts only of high literary quality, whether by known or unknown authors.

The entire machinery cannot, naturally, be worked out until some idea of the funds available is obtained, but it is probable that expert manuscript readers can be employed to narrow down the choice, both for the Buyers' Committee and the Editorial Committee.

The operation of the plan depends on the extent to which booksellers are willing to place their orders in advance and to pay for them in advance for the books of the Committee's choice. Booksellers will be urged to estimate conservatively, and a large number of individual orders rather than a smaller number of large ones will be sought. The plan allows for natural expansion; as the idea takes hold, booksellers will increase their orders, and thereby increase the amount of money available for promotion.

Shipping and billing will be done by the Clearing House of the A. B. A. All orders for each book, after the initial one, will be filled directly by the publishers.

## The Postal Bill in Congress

THE Conference Committee of the House and Senate on the Postal Rate Bill has failed to reach any conclusion that would make for progress. When the report was brought to the Senate, it was reported that the conferees had agreed to the Senate proposal of 3 cents a pound for library books and 1 cent for each additional pound instead of 2 cents for each additional pound as provided in the House Bill. The agreement had also been reached to adopt the House rate for third class matter which provides for 1½ cents for each 2 ounces instead of 1 cent as proposed by the Senate. On the differences in second class and fourth class matter no agreement could be reached, the Senate holding out for the zone rates of 1920, the House for those of 1921. The Senate provision would have reduced the government's potential revenue about \$3,000,000 more than the House plan. Still larger divergence existed in the case of fourth class, where the Senate proposed to wipe out all service charges, which would decrease the government's probable revenue by \$12,440,000.

Senator Moses asked that a committee be appointed for further conference, which was done. Congress will adjourn in about one week.

On May 23rd the House rejected the compromises.

## The Literary Guild Canvassing the Shops

A CONTRACT has been made by The Literary Guild with the Charles S. Clark Company, Inc., of New York, an established firm in the field of greeting cards, for canvassing bookstores and greeting card shops, with a plan to have them become subscription agents for the Guild yearly subscriptions. This new plan appears to have no relation to the recent discussion of the Guild with the booksellers and with the publishers who have held off from cooperation with them. No plan or decision will come from those discussions until next week, and the advertising currently in the mail from the Literary Guild is as antagonistic to bookselling as has been the previous publicity.



## Fair Trade Idea Wins Ground

THE committee report on the resale price bill now before Congress, which was referred to by the executive secretary of the A. B. A. in the recent convention, is an important step forward in the steady progress that has been made toward a clarification of the public's attitude on this type of legislation. The report is made by a sub-committee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of the House of Representatives, and is their study of the value of H. R. 11, more widely known as the "Capper-Kelly Bill," the bill backed by one of the ablest Senators and one of the most active Congressmen in Washington. The affirmative side of this report was signed by four representatives, including Schuyler Merritt of Connecticut, acting as chairman, Carl E. Mapes of Michigan, John E. Nelson of Maine, and Parker Corning of New York. The dissenting opinion was from Clarence F. Lea of California.

This sub-committee went over all the testimony that had been gathered on the subject and came to the conclusion that little or no additional light could be thrown on the bill by further testimony. This testimony, they say, points to undoubted evil connected with unrestricted right to sell trade-marked goods at any price which the seller thinks is to his advantage, and the question is, therefore, as to whether this evil can be cured by legislation. Such legislation, they declare, must be tentative and experimental because of changing conditions.

The Committee then state that H. R. 11, as drawn with one amendment which permits the owner of the stock to dispose of the seasonal stock at the end of that season, should be enacted in the public interest. There are no specific penalties, but they believe that the seller would have a practical remedy, in that he could legally decline to sell any dealer who violated the agreement. It is believed that the public would not suffer by any undue increase in price, because contracts must relate to articles that are in fair and open competition with commodities of the same

general class. The conditions of the bill are that a publisher may legally make his contract with regard to resale prices; that the purchaser may, without reference to the publisher, sell out at the low price under the following conditions: In discontinuing the line altogether; in disposing of all stocks at the end of a season if the books be especially adapted for that season; if the books are damaged and a notice to the public indicates that they are sold for that reason; in the case of winding up the business of a dealer by a receiver or trustee. There can be no agreements among publishers or among retailers as to the sale or resale price, but the agreement may be direct from the publisher to the retailer or thru the jobber to the retailer.

The questions that have been asked about the bill in the booktrade are: "First, does it apply to books?" And in answer to this the specific word "publisher" was introduced. The question then is, "Are books commodities which are in open competition with commodities of the same general class?" It would seem as tho this could hardly be doubted. The third question is "Whether the contract would have to be made individually with each separate book." It would seem as tho the bill did not specify as to the character of the contract, and the publisher could make such a contract for his leading books or for a line of books or adapt it to the need of any of the trade emergencies as they develop. Finally, there seems to be little likelihood that books would come back to the publisher, because the bookseller is free to close out any item which he is ceasing to reorder, or surplus stock by seasonal sale. It would, however, be impossible for a bookseller to order and reorder an item which he was playing up for cutting purposes, or a popular series which he had no intention of ceasing to sell but desired to use to make a price impression.

The report of this Committee is very carefully and judicially worded, and, tho it can have little effect on this Congress now closing, it seems to set the possibility of solution nearer.



# Report of Executive Secretary

Ellis W. Meyers



Ellis W. Meyers

THE Clearing House entered its second year of activity soon after the last convention, in July to be exact. At that time there were eighty-five booksellers who were using the service regularly. Starting with a week that was almost as great in volume as any week of the previous year, the volume of business and the number of accounts have grown steadily so that today there are over one hundred and fifteen booksellers and almost double the volume. Since January first of this year, it has shown that it can pay its expenses and leave a slight margin of profit. There is little more that can be said about this institution. It has successfully saved many hundreds of dollars for the bookellers who are using it. Estimating roughly, some ten thousand dollars were saved during the last six months of 1927. It has also enabled us to set up an organization thru which there has been disseminated a great deal of information regarding transportation costs and problems. We find that a great many of the members never used an enclosure service in the past, and they, of course, are the ones who are most appreciative. On the other hand those booksellers who have used enclosure services are equally enthusiastic about the work. I beg leave to quote the following endorsements:

"I think it is only fair to tell you how well the A. B. A. Clearing House is operating for us. The service is equal to, if not better, than what we have had in the past and the forwarding charges are from 20-25% less than under the old arrangement."

RICHARD FULLER,  
Old Corner Bookstore.

"To date we have been very much pleased with the service, and it has enabled

us to buy shorts on low priced books that were impossible to ship by express and make any profit, and we have given our customers better service and made more money."

NEW MEXICO BOOK STORE,  
Albuquerque, N. Mexico.

"The first freight case of books ordered sent thru the A. B. A. arrived this morning. We are delighted with the speed with which these books came thru."

ERIE DRY GOODS Co.,  
Erie, Pa.

At the end of May of last year, the first small unit of the Consolidated Warehouse was organized with the John Day Company, Macy Masius and William Morrow Co. These publishers placed their stock with us, and we did their stock room work and shipping. During the first few months there was a great deal of experimenting to do but since the first of this year, the Warehouse had grown steadily and this department, too, shows that it can pay its own expenses with a slight margin to spare. The following publishers have been added to the group: The Vanguard Press, The Unicorn Press, Henry M. Snyder, Lewis Copeland Inc., B. Westermann, National Bureau of Economic Research, Willett, Clark & Colby, and the Michael Gross Company. (We recently started shipping the posters made by the last named company.)

There is a growing interest in the trade in the development of the Clearing House and Consolidated Warehouse ideas and there can be little doubt but that the time is coming when the trade will have a real Book Center, representing in one building a majority of booksellers and publishers. This centralization will allow for many economies. There is a matter of cooperative buying. Several of the publishers recently sent a table of various of their costs to the office, and we find in comparing them to our own costs that even with our present small unit we have been able to effect a good sized savings in the purchase of most

of the packing material. There is also a matter of city delivery and trucking the cost of which, due to traffic conditions today, is very great. By using one fleet of trucks instead of a great many individual trucks the number of the delivery wagons could be cut at least fifty percent. Economies such as these will, of course, enable both publisher and bookseller to use the money saved in other departments of the business. It can be used, let us say, for purposes of increasing our business thru greater promotion. That methods of book distribution are gradually being reorganized in this new way is due to the many and unselfish efforts to introduce these new systems to the trade on the parts of men like Ernest Eisele, B. W. Huebsch and many others. It is my feeling that the trade owes these gentlemen a great debt for pointing out the path, and I wish to acknowledge my personal debt to Ernest Eisele whose council has been most helpful along every step of the way.

#### Advertising Department

Last spring the Association started two advertising services which have been used by a goodly number of booksellers for twelve months. In order to aid the bookseller in selling a definite idea about his usefulness to the community, paper dodgers are prepared at different periods of the year. They can be enclosed with bills, letters and in packages. Each of them attempts to present a reason for visiting the bookstore. There is one for vacation reading, one on book ownership, children's books, Christmas and a general reading four-page folder. The bookseller's name and address is imprinted on the face of this material so that there is a direct tie-up between the argument and the bookseller in the mind of the reader. The second service aids booksellers in preparing newspaper advertising copy. Mats are sent out twice a month to be used as headings for single and double column advertisements in order to decorate and illustrate the idea which the bookseller is presenting.

Material such as this which is issued thru the advertising department would be costly to the individual bookseller were it prepared by him for himself alone. But as the cost of the drawings and the advertising man's work is pro-rated over a large

number, the expense to each is slight. This advertising helps aid the bookshop in building up a well-rounded campaign thru the mail and thru display advertising but adds very little to the expense of such a campaign.

#### Education

The quite apparent desire of the trade for a course in retail bookselling led the Association to call in the Federal Board for Vocational Education which organization promised to aid in the preparation of such a course. During the past year, your Executive Secretary has met on several occasions with Mr. Barnhart of the Federal Board in order to discuss the plan and work out the *modus operandi*. There were two preliminary conferences called in New York at one of which Mr. Barnhart quizzed representatives of New York retail establishments for an entire morning and afternoon and received quite a bit of information from them. In order to complete the course successfully, it was then found necessary to have a meeting of at least eight representatives of the retail branch of the trade with Mr. Barnhart and his associates. Unfortunately this meeting would have to be held in Washington, and our attempts to get the requisite number of booksellers to Washington for a week were fruitless. It was impossible to find enough booksellers who could spend that length of time away from their own work.

Another method to complete this work is now being investigated, and the course in retail bookselling education will probably be available some time this year.

#### Employment

The Executive Office has, during the past year, placed several applicants for positions in various of our members' shops. We receive applications for positions from both experienced and inexperienced persons almost daily and as some of the organizations in the trade have learned of this fact we have been more and more successful in bringing together the persons who want positions and those who want employees. This department is developing rapidly and will undoubtedly be of service to a great many more people during the coming year.

Of course, the office is gradually growing into a sort of all round information



bureau where we are endeavoring to answer questions regarding anything from transportation to advertising. The location is ideal for the purpose because, while we have not all of the necessary tools, we are in very close touch with every agency from which we might expect to procure such information as we have not on hand.

#### Membership

Altho the Treasurer informs us that it has been necessary to drop a number of persons from the roster, he also says that our membership has increased during the past year. We know that the Clearing House and other services of the Association have attracted several new members. The increasing scope of our work and the many new things which the Association is introducing as well as the obvious general good which the Association is doing make membership in it of great value to the booksellers. Inasmuch as the efforts of our members in every way benefit all of those who are engaged in the profession, it is most unfair of any one to accept the fruit of this labor without contributing to it. This demand is not merely for the additional dues which come with new members but for the work which every one should do in building up our organization. It is hoped that those retail booksellers who are not members of the Association will no longer hold back their cooperation and support and that each of our members will make an active drive on the non-members in his community and get them to sign on the dotted line. More members make a stronger Association and make it possible to develop more important enterprises.

#### The Bulletin

The *Bulletin* has, during the last year, been going out monthly but as we review it it seems that it has not as yet become an organ of information. To date it would appear to be mostly a selling broadcast in which we have endeavored to interest the booksellers in such things as the Clearing House and the advertising services. Starting at once, the editorial policy, if it can be defined by such a name, will be changed so that the contents of the *Bulletin* may be more informative. We are receiving constant communications from many of the bureaus in Washington and find a great

deal of good information particularly coming from the Bureau of Commerce. This material, will in the future, be disseminated thru the *Bulletin*.

#### Ethical Practice

The price cutting situation is still worrisome. There are too many people taking advantage of the fact that books make particularly effective bargain offers, and the results have been harmful to many bookstores. During the year we have continued our work in trying to get legislation that will relieve this situation. The former Capper-Kelly bill has been changed to the Fair Trade Act and presented once again to Congress in slightly revised form. It calls for the legalizing of a vertical contract, that is, it allows the "grower, packer, manufacturer or publisher to make a contract with the vendee so that the vendee will not resell his commodity except at the price stipulated by the vendor so that the vendee will require any dealer to whom he may resell such commodity to agree that he will not in turn resell except at the price stipulated by such vendor or by such vendee." This refers, of course, to commodities which the bill defines as any subjects of commerce that bear the trademark print of the name of the producer or owner on the label or container which bears the trade marked print or the name of the producer or owner. Should this bill be passed, the publisher could, therefore, make a contract with retail outlets in which the retail outlets agreed to sell the publisher's products at the prices printed thereon and could also make a contract with the jobber under which the jobber would agree to resell only to such retail outlets as would make a similar contract with him. The *United States Daily* of today's date reports that the subcommittee of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce has reported favorably on this bill to the full committee. It says that, "The testimony shows that there are undoubted evils connected with the unrestricted right to sell trade-marked goods at any price which the seller thinks to his advantage. The question before the committee, therefore, is whether these evils can be cured by legislation in a manner which will be in the public interest. Any legislation on this subject must be to a degree tentative and



experimental, because, with the constantly changing conditions in manufacturing and distribution, the effect of any particular change in rights or methods can not be positively predicted.

"It is believed that H. R. 11 as drawn, with an amendment which the subcommittee proposes, will remedy the evils complained of to a certain extent and that it will be in the public interest. It seems certain that the public at large cannot be harmed by it."

The Federal Trade Commission has expressed its interest in this bill during the past year and is making an investigation of the conditions. If the Federal Trade Commission should report favorably at about the time that the committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce presents the bill to the house, there is a possibility that some sort of experimental law will go thru, and we will have an opportunity to sell at net prices.

#### **New Plans**

Retail bookselling like every other business is changing rapidly. Industries are learning new methods and means and are adopting them to meet the changing times. New types of competition are springing up and the established machinery has to be reorganized in order to conform and to compete.

During the past two years there has been introduced in this country a new form of retail bookselling, the book club. There is much to be said both for and against the idea and there has been much said both for and against it. In the first place its proponents have claimed that it will increase the public's interest in books and make new book readers. That contention is most certainly debatable. The publishers, booksellers, libraries and schools of this country have for a great many years been endeavoring to do just that. They have succeeded to a certain extent but they realize how difficult is their task. The book club, however, advertising in periodicals which are mainly of interest to those persons who already are readers, claims to be able to increase the sale of books thru an advertising campaign. It is doubted that they can do this. They also claim to "make" an additional sale on the selected books. Experience with some of the recent Book-of-the-Month Club se-

lections has shown that the particular books, good books, have not had an unusual sale because of the fact that they were selected. In some cases the results have been just the opposite. In the instances where the author has been well known the bookseller has not received the amount of business, particularly in advance orders, that he would get ordinarily.

Since the entrance of the Literary Guild this competition has taken on a new aspect. Not only thru the medium of a tremendous advertising outlay has the Guild criticised adversely the existing machinery for book distribution but it has advertised so as to make the public price conscious. Thru its campaign it has tended to increase the amount of price cutting. We realize, of course, that there can be no agreement in this Association as to the prices we charge our customers but under the same law we are permitted to collect and to disseminate information as to the costs of doing business. In this way we learn that the bookseller, thru careful management, is able to make a 35% gross profit and has an average 30% overhead. It is obvious that there is no considerable profit and it is equally apparent that an effort to meet the price cutting competition will leave none at all. But this advertising campaign has most surely stampeded a number of persons into one form or another of price cutting. As an example, when the Book-of-the-Month Club was first organized it was decided that they would compete with the trade on a service basis and that there would be no discounts or premiums and that postage would be extra. Since the inauguration of a second club the first has felt that it has had to meet the competition by offering premium books and prepaying postage. Incidentally, the postage on a book is usually 4% of its value.

With the awakening consciousness of the fact that the potential harm that might be done the booktrade is very great indeed, there have been fewer and fewer persons in the trade who cared to cooperate with the agency which has been instrumental in bringing about this new condition. I say "potential" because while I feel that this campaign is actually and immediately harmful there is a difference of opinion on this point. Recent experiences, however, have shown that it can be so developed that there

will be no room for an argument against the claim that it is damaging to the industry as a whole. During the past year several new book clubs have started operating and at the same time there have been presented to the executive office for its opinion no less than ten plans for organizations of the same type *and every one of them has had some price cutting scheme as its basis.*

The non-cooperative spirit is, of course, a negative way to meet these changing conditions. Actually to render ourselves immune from the harmful effects of the new competition we ought to devise a positive campaign. It is clear that we must meet the competition. It is certain that in order to hold our customers the bookshop should be in a position to give every book service that can be obtained thru any agency, and there must also be a positive campaign in which everyone takes part to interest the potential buyer in buying books, and not only just buying them but buying them in bookshops. It appears desirable to cooperate on a campaign to sell *BookShopping*.

For the past year we have endeavored to work out some plan that would be feasible and practicable. The Board of Trade has spent a great deal of time in whipping it into shape, and we are proceeding to offer it to the trade at this convention. It is not designed to be the final answer to our problem. It may not, altho we think that it will, be entirely effective. It has been presented to the members of the Association in our last *Bulletin* and to a number of publishers. The booksellers are apparently greatly in favor of it. There is unfortunately a difference of opinion among the publishers, but it seems that the majority of them wish to withhold final judgment until they see what action is taken at this meeting.

The plan is not intended as a book club altho it will give the bookseller the opportunity to say to his customers "If there are a number of people who wish to receive a book automatically each month that service can be given you by the bookshops."

Since first giving publicity to this idea we have received a great deal of comment and no little criticism. I will endeavor to present both sides of the case and inasmuch as I am biased will probably argue for the plan so that I hope those who have previ-

ously expressed their doubts as to its practicability will, at the executive session, take the floor and present their arguments more fully than I am able with my one-sided viewpoint. To begin from the beginning there are the reasons for our searching for some method such as this. These I have already explained. One of the criticisms which developed soon after the *Bulletin* was sent out, was that the plan was made public only a month before the convention and we were accused of endeavoring to stampede the Association. Of course, as I have merely changed certain fundamental parts of the proposal which I submitted to the Association in New York twelve months ago and as it is certain that the people in the trade have been constantly thinking of ways and means of meeting the new competition, and we know that the trade is more conscious of it today than it has ever been before, it does not appear reasonable that there was any such thought in our mind when the *Bulletin* was prepared. As a matter of fact the public announcement of this plan was delayed merely because it had not reached its present form until early this year, and Board of Trade and Executive Committee action was necessary before it was submitted.

#### The Plan in Detail

The plan has been considered intricate and difficult to organize. It appears to be simplicity itself. There are eleven steps.

1. A trade committee, headed by Joseph Margolies of Brentano and consisting of four experienced book buyers and your Executive Secretary, will be the original selecting organization.

2. Publishers will be requested to submit books to the Executive Office where the books will be divided by the committee chairman and sent to the other members for reading. These books will, of course, have to be submitted on the same basis as they are submitted to the book clubs, that is, some months in advance of publication, in galley or in manuscript.

3. Booksellers will be requested to give a standing order of so many copies of each of these selected books. The office is at present the possessor of orders for over a thousand books divided as follows:

1 of 500	1 of 50	2 of 25	2 of 5
4 of 100	1 of 35	1 of 10	



The booksellers who gave these orders are those to whom the plan was submitted immediately after its acceptance by the Board of Trade for their comment and criticism. Twenty others commented favorably and promised support. Two said they didn't approve.

4. Upon the selection of a book for a certain month all of the booksellers who have placed standing orders will be notified, and an order for the entire amount will be placed with the publisher for delivery to the Clearing House.

5. Upon receipt of the books from the publisher the Clearing House will ship them to the individual subscribers.

6. The Advertising Department will prepare advertising copy some samples of which are displayed here. This copy will consist of, (a) an advertisement of the BookSelection for the month, so that there will be a concentrated effort to repay the publishers' cooperation by selling his book in such quantities as to make worth-while the giving of an original long discount, and (b) the advertising of BookShopping. An effort to sell the idea that everyone ought to go to the bookshops, see what the bookseller has, compare one book with others, be on the booksellers' mailing list and buy books in bookstores. The copy will also contain the idea that should there be persons in the community who wish a monthly book service of the book club type the bookstore is in a position to give it.

The BookSelection will be advertised as recommended by authorities in the literary world, critics, authors, etc. The names and pictures of these people will be used. Our trade selecting committee will not be mentioned by name in the advertising.

7. The proposed schedule of discounts for booksellers is as follows:

Five copies	36%
Ten copies	38%
Twenty-five	40%
One Hundred	42%

8. It is proposed that we ask publishers to submit their books on the basis that if a book is accepted the discount shall be 55%.

9. It is proposed to start this plan at the time that the combined orders from

booksellers shall have reached ten thousand or more books per month.

10. Additional orders for books after the original shipment shall be made direct to the publisher or jobber as is customary with the individual bookstore.

11. The difference between the discount received from the publisher and that given to the bookseller will be spent, less the organization expenses of shipping and office work, for the advertising campaign. At least two-thirds of the differential will go into the campaign so that if we start with ten thousand copies the Association will be in a position to spend between seventy-five thousand dollars and one hundred thousand dollars a year for this advertising campaign.

As to the other objections:

One is that the publisher in selling the Association at a long discount is going to lose sales that he would ordinarily make to the trade. It does not seem likely that with booksellers in all parts of the country displaying and advertising the BookSelection along with the small but growing national advertising campaign that this is going to be the case. If the selection of the book clubs has stimulated an interest in the book selected by them then surely the display of these books thruout the country and the booksellers' natural attempt to make each BookSelection a success will make a sale that will be greater than that which the publisher would ordinarily have. It is also contended that the committee will select only the most salable books, that is books which are going to have a large sale under any circumstances. Obviously such a procedure would defeat the entire purpose of the plan as it would lessen the publishers' confidence in the bookseller's desire to build additional sales and increase the total gross of his business. As a consequence the committee will select good books, always of course, with a view to salability, but not necessarily books that are predestined to be best sellers.

The matter of financial responsibility has been discussed by the editor of the *Publishers' Weekly* as well as by every publisher to whom I have spoken. There are two ways to finance this plan. One is by making a subsidiary corporation to the American Booksellers' Association and asking each bookseller who wishes to cooper-



ate to buy stock in it. This makes the plan a bit more involved, and the most simple method is the second and the one with which your executive office has had some experience. In organizing and financing the Clearing House, booksellers were asked to deposit in advance sums that would cover the cost of the service to them for a period of three months. The same method can be used in financing this idea and it will be quite easy to figure the amount each bookseller will be asked to pay in advance because it can be based on the number of books which he promises to take.

#### Central Mailing Bureau

In a recent *Atlantic Bookshelf*, W. S. Thompson of Putnam's outlined a plan which appears to be practical and sound. His idea is to establish a mailing bureau in New York at which booksellers will keep their mailing lists made up on stencils. The rent and employee's expenses as well as the outlay for stenciling machines and addressographs will be paid by a group of publishers who will be known as the contributing publishers. The booksellers are to pay the cost of the stencils, each of which will bear the name of one of the bookseller's customers or potential customers. The stencils will remain the property of the bookseller and will not be available to anyone except on the bookseller's order. In this way a publisher who has a piece of advertising matter which he would like to imprint for booksellers and like to have mailed, can go to the bookseller, show him what he has and say, "How many can I imprint for you?" The booksellers will give him a written order for a certain amount to be delivered to the mailing bureau and upon its receipt, envelopes will be addressed from the booksellers' list and they will be mailed automatically, a bill going to the bookseller for postage and one going to the publisher for the service of addressing. The bookseller will, therefore, have a mail order department efficiently supervised without the trouble and cost of organizing and keeping it up himself. At a recent meeting of publishers in New York there was a feeling that before they decided to contribute to this work they would like to hear from the booksellers. In order to make it a paying proposition there will have to be a com-

bined list of one hundred thousand names placed at the central mailing office by the booksellers, and the publishers will most certainly consider this plan if the booksellers will show their willingness to use the bureau. Booksellers should send in the names and tell us how many will appear on each individual list. When we



Wallis Howe, Jr. of the *Atlantic Monthly* and Martha Stokes of *Scribners' Magazine*

have received promises of one hundred thousand names we can again go to the publishers and work out the actual procedure.

MR. JACOBS: I would like to say a word with reference to that last proposition Mr. Meyers referred to. We have been in correspondence with Mr. Thompson on the subject, and he got my son on the long distance phone this morning and said he would make a special trip to Atlantic City on Thursday morning if the convention desired it.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think personally it would be an excellent plan to have him here. We could probably work that in with the business session Thursday morning, and if it is agreeable to you all, we will do it.

[It was voted on motion duly made and seconded, that Mr. Thompson be invited to come to the Convention.]

# Report of the Board of Trade

Arthur Brentano, Jr.



Arthur  
Brentano, Jr.

The Board of Trade of the American Booksellers' Association respectfully submits to its officers and members the following report of its activities during the year just concluded, together with certain opinions and recommendations which we believe will be of interest to the Association, and which, we believe should be adopted by it.

## I.—Book Clubs

All are unquestionably interested in and informed of the Board of Trade's attitude toward the Book Club idea of Bookselling which has flourished more or less for some two years. The originator of this scheme in America, as you know, was the Book-of-the-Month Club. This organization upheld prices and merely competed with the bookseller on his own ground, giving a service that almost any bookseller could at least equal if not better. In certain instances, titles selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club had larger sales in the bookstores undoubtedly stimulated by the publicity gained thru wider circulation, but this additional sale of a selected title was in our opinion often made at the expense of some other equally worthy book.

The Board of Trade realizing that new ideas are necessary for the advancement of bookselling and book reading generally, has looked more toward the potential good that might be derived from this method of selling and had no quarrel with the Book-of-the-Month Club.

The Literary Guild of America's activities on the other hand are objectionable and harmful to the booksellers. In spite of advertising of "Half the published price, etc.," they have again requested that the Board recommend to our members the proposition that booksellers solicit subscrip-

tions for the Guild, offering a commission for each subscription taken, at the same time offering to slightly alter their method of advertising. The Board, with the Executive Secretary, seriously considered this proposition from all angles, but as the Guild had still retained the price cutting objection, the Board did not feel that it could recommend to its members the acceptance of this proposition.

We wish to call to your attention not only the featuring of half-price rates in the Guild advertising but also most emphatically the dishonest and misleading statements that appear in this copy, as well as in other advertisements of the same organization.

"The Literary Guild is close to the heart of the book world. Its editors are writers, educators, literary specialists. By arrangement with all leading publishing houses, they know exactly what major manuscripts each one will publish. From those they choose the most important ones each month to read. A final selection is then made of the ONE book that represents the most significant and worth-while literary achievement of the month."

Of course you know that the following well known and influential publishers have never dealt with the Guild: Appleton, Bobbs-Merrill, Boni & Liveright, Brentano's, Century, Crowell, Cosmopolitan, Dutton, Dodd, Mead, Doubleday, Doran, Duffield, Dial Press, Funk & Wagnalls, Holt, Houghton Mifflin, Knopf, Lippincott, Little, Brown, Longmans, Green, Macy-Masius, Morrow, Minton Balch, McBride, Oxford, Penn, Putnam, Scribner's, Stokes and many others.

The Guild has been successful in getting books from only the following publishers: A. & C. Boni (3), Simon & Schuster (2), Greenberg, Macaulay, Macmillan, Doran, Viking, John Day, Harper, Harcourt (2). Of the ten publishers listed above four have most definitely stated that they will not again cooperate.



Naturally, under these circumstances, the American Booksellers' Association has asked the Better Business Bureau to investigate such unethical business methods. We understand that one New York and two Boston papers have refused this copy because of the mis-statements.

A census of the publishers was attempted by a circular letter mailed on November 12th to representative publishers requesting the attitude of publishers on the Guild matter. Answers were received from fifteen publishers by letter, and several others verbally. To quote from sample letter—

"This Company is unwilling to contribute in any way to the marketing of books at less than the established published price. We believe that the natural distributor of books is the bookseller, and we will support him in every way possible."

We feel that it is a pity that a few publishers have jeopardized the whole system of net prices and trade cooperation, which we all know to be so necessary for the advancement of bookselling, for the sake of a few paltry dollars.

## II.—Price Cutting

Price-cutting on the part of some few department stores is still, unfortunately, a thing with which we have to contend. Apparently federal legislation is the only remedy, and the Board of Trade has followed its past efforts to obtain such legislation and to obtain the support of publishers and others in this regard. The present bill in Congress, now known as the Fair Trade Act, H R 11, is being investigated by the Federal Trade Commission and should that body report favorably there is a great possibility that such legislation will not be long in coming. The bill provides for a legalized vertical contract, that is, a contract which can be made by the producer of a trademarked article and the retailer, in which the retailer will agree to sell at the marked and advertised price, or between the producer and the wholesaler or jobber, in which the wholesaler or jobber will agree to sell to retailers under the same form of contract. The report of two attorneys has been forwarded to the National Association of Book Publishers, which organization has been advised

by its counsel that the bill does not cover books. The aforesaid report of our own attorneys disagrees with this finding, and the matter has again been referred to the publishers with the request that they go on record to the Federal Trade Commission, as well as the sponsors of the bill in both houses, and whomsoever else may be of service in this work, saying that they need legislation of this sort to protect an industry that is vulnerable in the extreme and that is being seriously hurt now thru a price war.

## III.—The Clearing House

The Board has followed closely the growth of the Clearing House—now in its second year. It has added a nucleus of publishers' stock rooms, which is called the Consolidated Warehouse, which department is now almost thru its first year of experimentation. Due to the quick growth of this organization, it has had to make two moves to larger and better quarters and is now located at the corner of University Place and Ninth Street, New York City, having ample room to handle its growing business, and prospects indicate that this project of the Association will be on a paying basis for the coming year. The Board recommends and requests that all members of the Association do their share to aid in the development of this organization and that they, the members, at the same time study carefully the plan of the Clearing House so that they may see where it will be of decided benefit to themselves and, therefore, use this new tool which has been placed at their disposal. The board also recommends that publishers study the second department, that of the Consolidated Warehouse, in order to work for that for which we have long hoped, a book center or book building.

## IV.—Executive Secretary

The Board of Trade heartily endorses the work of its Executive Secretary, Ellis W. Meyers, whose work is increasingly effective. Often his efforts are unduly hampered by lack of membership cooperation. We urge members to utilize the facilities that are at their disposal in the office of the Executive Secretary. Here for the asking can be had assistance on problems dealing with selling, advertising, pub-



licity, shipping, accounting, etc. Mr. Meyers is constantly devising new schemes to make his office increasingly valuable to members; but his plans will be fruitless unless the Association members study Association bulletins and avail themselves of the service and suggestions offered.

#### V.—Advertising Service

The Board recommends to the attention of the members of the Association the Advertising services which are being given by the executive office. This department has been quite successful during the past year and is expanding rapidly. Aid in the preparation of advertising and material that can be used by bookstores can be had upon request.

#### VI.—Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics which the Association adopted at the 1927 convention has been adhered to for the most part thruout the trade. In cases where there have been infringements of the Code the situation has been referred to the Board and the the Executive Office and in practically every instance those guilty of improper trade practices have been prevailed upon to accept the ethical code of the Association and have promised not to offend again.

#### VII.—Censorship

The Board is pleased to report that the furor caused by censorship publicity, which publicity is not always to the advantage of the trade, has somewhat subsided within the past year. The Board has often stated its objection to federal, state and municipal censorships of books. The Board is opposed to the publication and distribution of salacious books. The publication and sale of books primarily on the basis of their salacious appeal invites censorship with its obvious evils. The Board wishes to restate its opinion that intelligence, good taste, a sense of humor and common sense, are the Board of censors to whose dictates publishers, booksellers and the reading public should conform.

#### VIII.—Handling Library Orders

The Board calls attention to the question of excessive discounts allowed to libraries by publishers, jobbers and retailers and

recommends the following resolution:

WHEREAS it is the common knowledge of booksellers that library business cannot be profitably handled at the rates now being currently quoted, and

WHEREAS, cut-throat competition for quantity orders has brought about great confusion in the trade, and recriminations between publishers, jobbers, and booksellers, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that booksellers be urged to resurvey their costs of handling library business and to put quotations on the basis of service competition with a profit for the work performed, and that publishers and jobbers be strongly urged to take a sounder view of the whole problem in order that the channels of distribution may function more rationally thru the retail bookseller.

#### IX.—Postal Rates

The Board commends the activity of the National Association of Book Publishers during the past year in its efforts to bring about a reduction in the postal rate on books. We once again recommend that this Association adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, existing parcel post rates to which books are subject are greatly in excess of the flat rate of 1½ cents per pound applicable to similar reading matter contained in magazines and other second class matter, and

WHEREAS, such parcel post rates are substantially in excess of rates for books when sent to any point beyond the fourth zone, and

WHEREAS, such exorbitant postal rates which may be borne by the purchasers of books result in greatly discouraging and to a large extent, absolutely prohibiting the purchase of books by the public, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the American Booksellers' Association urges upon the Seventieth Congress the enactment of legislation to effect a separate classification of mail matter for books and lower postal rates therefor, such as contemplated by Senate Bill 2040 of the Seventieth Congress, which provides that

"(a) Mail matter of the fifth class shall include books consisting wholly of reading matter and containing no advertising matter other than incidental announcements of books;

"(b) The rate of postage on books included in subdivision (a) shall be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound or fraction thereof, with a minimum charge of three cents for each parcel now prescribed by law for mail matter of the fourth class."

Be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that our President be authorized and directed to communicate the above portion of this resolution to each member of the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads of the House of Representatives and of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads of the Senate immediately upon the convening of the Seventieth Congress, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that each member of the American Booksellers' Association is earnestly requested to interview personally if possible, or otherwise to communicate with the Representative in Congress from his District and the United States Senators from his state for the purpose of urging the enactment of such legislation.

#### X.—The Retail Outlet

The Board wishes to emphasize the fact that there should be only one retail outlet, the bookstore. Business which is obviously retail business should not be diverted from the bookseller by either publisher or jobber. The Board recommends that all advertising be phrased so as to send such business to the retail distributors.

#### XI.—Bookselling Training

The Board has previously called your attention to the need for a course for training booksellers in the technique of bookselling. During the past year E. W. Barnhart of the Federal Board For Vocational Education was called in to aid us in developing such a course. Due, however, to the fact that meetings had to be held in Washington and that few booksellers could spend the necessary time (a period from one to two weeks) away from their businesses it is not possible to report the completion of this work at the present time. A method whereby, now that he has agreed to aid us, Mr. Barnhart's cooperation can be utilized, will be devised and the work will be started immediately. The Board urges booksellers to cooperate in every possible way.

The Board calls attention to the two

courses scheduled for this summer at Columbia University. They will begin on July 9th. The first, "Practical Aspects of Bookselling" is to be given by Frederic Melcher and "Selecting and Buying Books for a Bookshop" is to be given by Miss Sarah B. Ball of Ball & Wilde.

#### XII.—Trade Discounts

The Board of Trade again calls to the attention of publishers the matter of more liberal trade discounts.

Most manufacturers acknowledge that retailers handling their product in well



*"The Saturday Review of Literature" at the Convention—Vrest Orton, Eileen Murphy and Noble Cathcart*

stocked stores in good locations, widely covering the various shopping centers of this vast country, are essential. The scarcity of such bookstores in comparison to other lines of merchandise has often been noted. Therefore, we recommend that the Convention adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that publishers be urged to examine their schedule of discounts with a view to a wider margin that will place bookselling on a sounder and more profitable basis. It is our firm belief that a standard discount of forty per cent would do much to accomplish this purpose.



## XIII.—A Book Promotion Campaign

Mr. Meyers has been working thruout the entire year on the scheme just outlined to you, thru which we shall be able to have an advertising campaign that will sell the idea of "Bookshopping," or the buying of books in bookshops, to the public. This plan will give us an opportunity to compete for business which other agencies are endeavoring to obtain and at the same time to attract new customers to the stores. The advertising appropriation will be earned by the Association thru its ability to buy one book a month in large quantities and resell it to the members. The members are requested to give an order for a certain number of each of these books for each month. The books will be selected by a trade selecting committee of competent book buyers altho the advertising will feature persons high in literary and other circles who will each month endorse this committee's selection. The margin between the cost of the books to the Association and the usual trade discounts will be devoted to the advertising campaign. We call at-

tention to the success of the Florists Association with their "Say it with Flowers campaign," the Greeting Card Association and many other organizations which have greatly increased the business in their trades thru advertising of this type. We must compete, not among ourselves, but with florists, candy stores, toy shops and the numerous other real competitors, including book clubs, that are today making sales to persons who could and should be sold books by bookstores.

The Board heartily endorses this plan and urges our members to give it their full support in the belief that benefits hitherto undreamed of are sure to materialize.

PRESIDENT KIDD : If there is no objection, this excellent report will be referred to the Resolutions Committee for action. (No objection.) I shall appoint on that Committee:

*Resolutions Committee:* George W. Jacobs, Alfred Hartog, Ward Macauley, Arthur Brentano, Jr., Simon L. Nye, chairman.

## Promotion and Legislative Work of the Publishers' Association

Marion Humble

*of the National Association of Book Publishers*

IN the *Saturday Evening Post* of last week there is a remarkably stimulating advertisement featuring the "Tireless Wings" of new all-metal airplanes which "are being built to meet the requirements of this new age." One paragraph in it seems especially applicable to our business: "In the growth of modern business," it reads, "complacency is fatal. And success depends upon eternal vigilance . . . an energetic search for broader markets . . . and a courageous optimism in the face of all competition."

It was with this spirit eight years ago that the National Association of Book Publishers, in the face of a general business slump and tremendously increased produc-

tion costs, started the Year-Round Book Promotion Campaign, determined to build a demand for books, and to help booksellers increase and supply that demand. It was with this spirit that the American Booksellers' Association in convention here in Atlantic City seven years ago saw and approved the first year's working of the Year-Round Bookselling Plan.

During these years we have seen significant changes in bookselling. Sales of non-fiction have increased amazingly; book sales have been spread thruout the year rather than concentrated at the holiday season; and the publishing and selling of children's books have reached higher standards. The Year-Round Plan—especially



our carefully built-up contacts with women's clubs, parent-teacher associations, schools, libraries, church organizations, newspaper and magazine writers and editors—has been in great measure responsible for these changes and for the increasing nation-wide desire for books and for information about books.

Many booksellers are taking advantage locally of these contacts which we build with national organizations. Others seem shy about pushing the bookstore—a “commercial organization”—with the schools and clubs and churches. The bookstore is the one “commercial organization” which educational groups want to see pushed, want represented at their meetings with book lists, book exhibits, book talks.

There is a national educational campaign under way to feature parents' education. The organization planning the campaign will reach literally millions of adults with suggestions of books to read and buy. Bookstores should anticipate this demand by studying the literature on this subject and informing local club and school groups of their desire to cooperate with the work. Bookstores that are working along these lines should encourage others to develop such service.

The National Association of Book Publishers has grown to a membership of eighty book publishers, with sixteen additional smaller publishers affiliated in support of the Promotion Campaign. From year to year our budget for this work has been doubled, making possible more material, larger mailing lists, more effective work with all the groups which are building book-buyers, and sending people into the bookstores.

The Book Publishers' Association distributes thousands of pamphlets on reading,

on building a home library, on vacation reading, on the importance of children's reading, at state educational and club meetings, state Sunday school association meetings, and others, but we cannot send out lists of books, and we cannot sell books.

From every part of the country comes the request, “We need more booklets to guide us in ordering new books.” The bookseller should supply these lists and sell the books.

In our efforts to get postal rates on books reduced, some headway has been made. We have had wonderful support in this work from the club, school, and library organizations which have been working with us on promotion work, and which realize the injustice of present postal rates on



*Marion Humble*

books. Our bill, introduced by Senator Copeland of New York in the Senate, and by Representative Luce of Massachusetts in the House, recommends a separate classification of books in the mails, with a flat rate of 2½ cents per pound for all books mailed anywhere in the United States. At the hearing of the House Committee on the Postoffice and Post Roads on February 15th, our counsel filed a brief for this bill, and representatives of the American Library Association, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Authors' League, and the National Education Association spoke. John W. Hiltman, John Macrae, and Frank W. Scott of the Book Publishers' Association also appeared. The House Committee seemed favorably impressed with our case, but the Postoffice Department filed a protest against our bill on the grounds of decreased revenue, and recommended a slight reduction only in books circulated by public libraries. This bill

was passed by the House and also by the Senate, even tho the library organizations have opposed it as insufficient and offering practically no relief. This bill is now in conference, but may never become a law. Senator Copeland's bill still has a chance, we believe, as it has never been reported out of committee, and we are continuing to bring pressure to bear on the Senate Committee to report it favorably. The clause in the main postal rates bill which was passed by the Senate provides a rate of three cents for the first pound, and one cent for each additional pound on books circulated by libraries. The American Library Association and the American Federation of Labor have both protested against this insufficient concession. It is, however, a recognition in favor of books, and we hope it will be carried further.

Our Lecture Bureau, financed by a three year subscription from the Employing Bookbinders of America, has proved its effectiveness in building new book interest and new book buyers. Henry Cecil, an experienced school man, now represents us in this work, and is to tell you about it here today. It is developing contacts which should mean sales to the bookstores.

One need we find everywhere in developing promotion work is the need of book-selling education. When Mr. Barnhart, of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, addressed you last year, it seemed as if you were ready to go ahead with the development of a course for bookstore em-

ployees which should mean improved selling and increased sales. The College Bookstore Association pledged support and \$100 toward the necessary preliminary conferences with the Federal Board. The National Association of Book Publishers offered to subscribe \$1000 toward developing the course. I urge you not to let drop the interest of the Federal Board in making a store manual available. Conferences of booksellers in Washington with the Federal Board are the only requirement made of you. Increased publicity for bookstores would result from the promotion which the Government would give the course, increased prestige for the American Booksellers' Association. The American Booksellers' Association might use such courses to increase membership, and as the nucleus of regional conferences which might be held each year for the benefit of those booksellers who cannot come to the convention.

Increased efficiency in the bookstore must develop along with the increasing demand for books and for information about books. We must all continue with energy and courageous optimism, and in that common bond which unites all publishers and booksellers, and in which they depend on each other—in the face of all competition and controversy—the desire to sell more books!

PRESIDENT KIDD : As we meet on the common ground of mutual interest, we are grateful for your cooperative service, Miss Humble.

## What the Bureau of Lectures is Doing

Henry L. Cecil

*Lecture Bureau of the National Association of Book Publishers*

AS most of you know, the main objective of the work of the Bureau of Lectures of The National Association of Book Publishers is to help sell more books by forming contacts for the bookseller. In order to do this, however, certain minor objectives must be established or built up.

It has been realized that the best contacts for the bookseller, if his business is to be progressively successful, are made among the young people of the country, and that we must reach the youth of to-day if we are going to increase the number of readers of to-morrow. Therefore, in order to create the desire to read and to form the



reading habit among the young people we have been working thru the schools, chiefly in towns of average population. Engagements for talks in the schools have been made thru the superintendent of schools who has been asked to invite the librarian and the booksellers to hear the talks. The booksellers have been notified in advance of the visit of the speaker and it has been suggested that they, if possible, arrange book exhibits at the schools during the talks, and they have been advised that the speaker would call upon them to offer the further service of the National Association of Book Publishers in promoting book sales. Advance publicity notices have been sent to the newspapers with suggestions that reporters, if possible, be present at the talks.

In the lectures to the schools particular emphasis has been laid on the value of school libraries and on the advantages of ownership of home libraries. Practical suggestions for promoting both school and home libraries have been given to the teachers and the students and promoting material distributed to them. Increasing interest in school libraries is evident. Each year is seeing several hundred new school libraries established, with trained librarians in charge.

Recently the heads of this work in our state educational departments have been reached and encouraged to establish good book reading standards. In this phase of promotion work the school is at every opportunity directed and encouraged to cooperate with the local bookstores.

In stressing the importance and value of building home libraries the speaker uses apt illustrations in linking books to individual needs and directs the students toward the bookstores to purchase.

In many towns the speaker has also addressed civic organizations and emphasized the necessity of building a book consciousness in the community. Here the position of the bookseller as the leader and guide for the reading interests in his town

is recognized and stressed. Such meetings have afforded many opportunities for direct contacts between the members of the groups and the booksellers.

I believe you will be interested in an illustration of one of my typical days. I arrived the evening before the day for which my engagements were made, and called the Superintendent of Schools and the Librarian. The following morning at 8 o'clock I called at the Public Library and then, accompanied by the Librarian,



*Henry L. Cecil*

went to the first school on my schedule where I spoke on "Books and Reading." At the close of this talk, one of the leading booksellers of the city joined the Librarian and me, and we three proceeded to another school where I spoke at 10:30. At noon a civic organization was addressed on the topic of "Books and Citizenship." Following the luncheon the Librarian and Bookseller accompanied me to two Junior High schools where I spoke again on "Books and Reading." During the day 5,000 were addressed. After the last talk of the afternoon the bookstores were called upon, and ideas and suggestions for further book promoting exchanged, and further help of the National Association of Book Publishers offered. Reporters from the newspapers were present at the talks and an interview with the city editor of one was also given.

Since last November ninety cities have been visited in the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Virginia, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas,



Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and the District of Columbia; two hundred sixty-seven lectures have been given to schools and colleges; seventeen lectures to various other groups have been given; two hundred thousand students and teachers have attended the lectures; and three hundred eighty-four bookstores have been called upon. The type of schools and colleges has varied from those of our highly cultured cities to those of the mountain districts of the South.

The follow-up work of the National Association of Book Publishers has been extensive. Newspaper publicity about the lectures has been good. Thousands of people who did not hear about the lectures have read reports of them in the press, and books have been discussed at the dinner table in many homes. Advance releases have been used and in some cases two or three articles in the same paper have appeared before and after the talks, usually mentioning the bookstores and the library as well as the schools, thus continuing the interest that has been stimulated in the book talks.

There is great opportunity here for the booksellers to follow up these stimulating talks with special sales campaigns.

Following the suggestions from the report sent in by the speaker from each town visited, letters have been written to schools, bookstores and libraries offering the National Association of Book Publishers' year-round service of posters and other publicity aids. Further details about the establishment of school libraries have been sent and correspondence invited.

Certain psychological principles are involved both in creating a desire for books and in selling books. Should our representative come to your city, we trust that you will get out yourselves to the talks or send some of your leading sales people to make contacts for your store—contacts which mean more book sales for you. We want to work for you and with you.

In all the various factors that go to spell *Success* in bookselling may there be but one tongue and that the tongue of

*Service.* The service of the Association is yours to use at your will.

PRESIDENT KIDD : We all appreciate the one tongue idea, and we also appreciate Mr. Cecil's very helpful remarks.

I will ask for a report from Howard M. Jacobs of the Entertainment Committee.

HOWARD M. JACOBS outlined the various activities.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I'd like to hear from George W. Jacobs for the Program Committee.

GEORGE W. JACOBS: You have the program before you, and it speaks largely for itself. Miss Humble pointed out that at the convention at Philadelphia some eight years ago a decided im-

petus was given to the business of book-selling. I am going to predict that at this convention in Atlantic City, a suburb of Philadelphia, another impetus is going to be given to the business of book selling.

The fundamental idea back of this program on the part of your committee was the merchandising of books, and with that idea in mind we arranged to have five outstanding speakers cover the general principles underlying business in general. Three of these men you will observe are teachers of business, and will perhaps speak from an academic standpoint, but the other two are practical men. Now, the thought of your committee was that the chairman of the group conferences should note the salient points of these speakers and apply them to the merchandising of books at the conferences on Wednesday.

PRESIDENT KIDD : The next man will tell us how easy it is to save money. We will hear from the Chairman of the Committee on Return Certificates, I. Ottenheimer.

[MR. OTTENHEIMER made announcements with regard to return certificates.]

PRESIDENT KIDD : I might say that I had a private communication from Mr. Ottenheimer, and in his usual generous and courteous way he has offered, if there is any real deficit, to start in and ride back and forth between Baltimore and Atlantic City until we get the 250!

*Adjournment*



*Howard M.  
Jacobs*

TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 15, 1928

PRESIDENT KIDD : The first man on the program is Dr. Norris A. Brisco, Dean of New York University School of Retailing. Dr. Brisco, as you probably know, has written a great deal. He is the Editor of the Retailing Series, Editor with members of his family of the *Journal of Retailing*, he is author of "Retail Economics of Business," "Economics of Efficiency," "Fundamentals of Salesmanship," "Retail Salesmanship," etc., and various other books, all of which are most important. In working

out our program this year the intention was to cover the entire field of retail book-selling, merchandising, buying, and all that contributed to the general successful operation of the modern bookstore, and I think that when we have finished and you have heard all the speakers that you will have a pretty clear and comprehensive idea of the elements that go towards the successful management and operation of the modern shops. It is a pleasure indeed to call on Dr. Brisco.

## Merchandising Principles Applicable to Book Retailing

Dr. Norris A. Brisco

I USE the term "book retailer" because I like that term better than "book-seller." "Book retailer" is a force of the new régime in retailing where retailing is approached in the scientific angle.

We have with us today the book publisher, representatives of the book publisher, representatives of the large stores, like Brentano's, and we also have representatives of the small modern store. My paper is addressed primarily to the man doing a business of \$50,000, \$75,000 and \$100,000.

Merchandising is the new watchword of the retailing future. Merchandising and service are the two key words in the future.

The earliest merchants were adventurers who carried on barter with strangers. Trading was frequently associated with deceit, fraud and violence. This is illustrated by the fact that Mercury, god of cunning and barter, was chosen as the patron deity of merchants and traders. The Greeks held trade an unworthy occupation, and their word for a retail trader was the same as falsifier. Cicero held that no one could be a successful merchant without lying. The old Italian word for retailer also meant a tendency to cheat.

The genesis of the retail trade was the market fair, stall, shop, and store. The

stall was the forerunner of the shop. As early as 1189, writers mentioned stalls in London. A civic ordinance of the reign of Edward II declares that a stall should be movable and flexible and not more than 2½ feet in depth. Later the stall gave way to the shop. The shop was an open room on the street protected by a shelter which closed it at night. Above the shelter were windows which were used to display goods. Stowe states that the reckless spending during his time was due to the fact that display windows made such a show in passengers' eyes that they could not help gazing in and buying displayed knick-knacks. Later each shop had a sign to tell the trade of the owner. A survival of this custom is the pawnbroker's three balls. It is interesting to note that originally the coat of arms of an Englishman who made a business of lending money in small amounts consisted of three balls.

The opening of the eighteenth century saw the establishing of shops of large size. Some merchants sold only the goods they manufactured, while others bought their goods from other sources. A traveler from the continent shopping in London in 1715, described mercer's shops as perfect gilded theaters and mercers as the sweetest, fairest, nicest, dished out creatures with



elegant dress and soft speeches and called them "the greatest fops in England."

The itinerant merchant or peddler played an important rôle in America during colonial days as well as during the first half of the nineteenth century. The small general store arose as a means of assembling goods that were in great demand, but were manufactured in distant places. It is generally accepted that the department store is a later evolution.

In a small store of the last century, one man bought and sold, advertised his wares, managed the store, and kept records of his transactions. As the store grew in size, the merchant found it necessary to delegate some of his varied duties to others. Many stores have grown rapidly during the past two decades with little conscious attention to organization. At present many are facing the problem of a large store with an organization suited to a small one. Organization is today an outstanding problem in retailing.

A survey of the types of organization in leading stores will not give a conclusive decision as to a standard type. Some have a group of partners at the head, others a single czar and still others an operating committee. A variation is found in the divisions of organization. Some stores have three divisions; merchandise, control, and store management while others have four, the preceding three with the addition of publicity.

In many stores, the merchandise division predominates. It is considered the producing division of the store so to this business the owners turn their own efforts. Today with increasing competition all the divisions are important, publicity because of the need of more effective sales promotion, control because of necessity of protecting net profit, and store management because of the consumer expectancy of complete service.

The functions of the merchandise division may be divided into two groups, merchandising and buying. Merchandising is the function of maintaining the most advantageous proportion between sales stocks and profits and of controlling the relation between purchases and estimated future sales. The buying function provides the merchandise, seeks for the best vendors, strikes the best bargains, selects the lines,

styles, colors and sizes. It is a buying function to prepare items to be featured by the publicity division. At present, there is considerable controversy as to whether the buyer should have charge of directing and stimulating the sales force. This paper is concerned with the merchandising subgroup.

The following are the chief merchandising functions and the performance of each in an efficient manner is as essential in a small store as in a large department store. *The basic function* is merchandise control. The secret for success in every form of retailing is advantageous turnover resulting from the carrying of stocks just sufficient to meet public demand. Turnover in its ordinary sense means turnover of stock not of capital. Stock turnover means the number of times during a certain period, usually a year, that the average stock of merchandise is bought and sold. The turnover varies for different kinds of stores and for different kinds of merchandise. Nevertheless in each case an average turn may be ascertained and the aim should be to reach this or to increase it.

A few years ago Mr. Shedd, former President of Marshall Field & Company, one of the great merchandising geniuses of the Middle West, made this statement: "In the future we must look first, last and all the time to turnover." That was questioned in more expensive merchandise.

The ideal turnover policy is a small stock selling rapidly and being constantly replaced with new merchandise. The following factors tend to decrease turnover:

- (1) slow-moving merchandise carried for prestige,
- (2) too large a stock for the sales volume,
- (3) poor display,
- (4) poor advertising,
- (5) poor salesmanship.

Whereas the following factors assist in increasing stock turn.

- (a) ability to buy books that are salable,
- (b) ability to sell books with a minimum loss,
- (c) careful control of purchases,
- (d) maintenance of an efficient sales organization as well as effective advertising department.





*Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Brentano with Mrs. Brentano's mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Hyams*

A shoe retailer was not satisfied with his turnover and made a careful study of his business. The following condition was found:

Classifications	No. of Styles	No. of Pairs	Annual Turn-over
1 Rapid-moving styles	5	545	16
2 Average " "	40	2200	6.3
3 Slow- " "	105	7050	1.8
4 Non- " "	32	950	
	182	10745	av. 2.8

In a few months, he reduced his stock from 10745 to 5640 pairs, and the number of styles from 182 to 84. In group (c) the numbers of styles was reduced from 105 to 40 and the number of pairs from 7050 to 2551. As a result of the change the stock turn was increased from 2.8 to 4.3, and profit was likewise substantially increased.

Records of sales, stocks and purchases should be carefully analyzed and on the basis of previous experience and developments there should be planned the volume of purchases that will give the turnover desired.

*A second function* is the advising of buyers as to market conditions, price tendencies and resources. In small stores this function is usually left to buyers. It is

important to give assistance so that the chief factors may be analyzed with care. Business conditions play a rôle in the book business. Prosperity and depression have rather marked influences with many lines of books. Current events, political, economic and social should be carefully studied. Reading interest varies with what is chief interest to the public. Many people are invariably anxious to secure latest information and comprehensive knowledge of what may be chief public interest. Advice as to what books will give this will be duly appreciated. Many bookstores absolutely neglect this important phase of book merchandising.

*A third merchandising function* is the supervision of departmental activities of buyers. The owner of the small store or the merchandise manager of the large one should make certain that the merchandising policies of the store are carried out by the buyers. Vigilance should be taken to see that the policies governing service to customers and appearance of the store are followed.

*A fourth and important function* is giving assistance to buyers in the promotion of sales. Book advertising and sales promotion are assuming greater and greater importance. These important factors have

been in a large measure neglected but are destined to play an important rôle in book merchandising in the future.

#### **Promoting Boys' and Girls' Books**

In regard to books for boys and girls, I was glad to see advertisements for some of these books outside. We have in our towns many bird clubs. My little girl wanted to get a book on birds. Mrs. Brisco went to four or five book stores to get it. At a certain time of year a little folder with a little description of two or three books on birds sent around to the boys and girls of the town would be a splendid sales promotion plan. At certain times of year, plan for promotion of books for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. I had to go to the New York Central Office to get two books for my son, who is a Boy Scout. Easter time is a wonderful time for the purpose of promoting certain types of books. It is neglected. I believe last Washington's Birthday we had more books sold concerning Washington than in any previous year, the birthday offers a splendid opportunity. We have a number of books on Washington's life. The average bookstore thruout the country did not take advantage of that. Take Lincoln's Birthday. People are reading more about Lincoln all the time. Last year, look at the number of books that came out on Lincoln's life. But the anniversary of his birth often is lost sight of as a good time to sell books about him. We have during the year numerous events. For instance, we have at certain times of year confirmations. It is customary for the parents to give the son or daughter a book or hymnal. We have certain social events. We have Al. Smith, the likely candidate for President. His life came out. Some bookstores took advantage of that.

Boys from eight to eleven or twelve years of age are interested in certain types of books. Not enough effort is made in many instances to use this important fact for sales promotion. It is claimed that in America many keen minds get diversion from detective stories of different kinds. I just heard before I came here of plans for an organization for publications dealing with crime.

Sales promotion in its broadest sense embraces all activities that promote the sale of merchandise. Wherever there is

customer contact there is the probability of sales promotion. Book sales promotion in its narrower sense means sales planning and various ways of encouraging customers to buy books. It is promoting the sales of books with a definite plan. This may be a drive for new trade or to get volume business. The method of sales promotion may be a newspaper advertising campaign, a direct-by-mail effort, a special window display, a lecture.

As to direct by mail advertising, we have stores today in other lines than books paying attention to direct by mail advertising. In my estimation direct by mail is a very fruitful plan for sales promotion for the next five years.

The line of books we find neglected today in the bookstore is the business book. In New York City a friend of mine went to five different stores to get a book on business. Finally he got it at Brentano's. Business men are really reading more books on business. Book retailers should pay attention to that. Thousands of customers are hungry for such information.

Advertising is a real creative force in the book store. It creates new discussions for books and gross assistance to the public in securing books for special occasions or definite information. Advertising is destined to be the strongest single factor in book merchandising during the next decade. Advertising has been defined as the art of creating a new want. But in book merchandising advertising has a wider function. It is used to bring books before the public. Customers like to be told when they may secure certain kinds of information. The American public is becoming a greater and greater reading public. Thousands of customers are hungry for information. They do not know where to secure it. They welcome assistance in the matter and will buy. The fact that the American public does not buy more books is due primarily to poor sales promotion and poor advertising on the part of the book retailers.

*A fifth function* is the supervision of the purchasing power of buyers so as to maintain the most representative stock possible with a minimum of investment. The book retailer function is that of serving his community as a purchasing agent. The merchandise policy that is accepted as



the most conducive to sales and profits is the merchandise from the customer angle rather than the book publisher's angle. In other words to base buying policy on customer needs rather than on what book publishers want.

Ascertaining what to purchase, not from the whims and wishes of the buyer, but from an understanding of what the customer really wants to read is the new trend in book merchandising. The customer demand side has assumed an important rôle in successful buying for a bookstore. The study of what customers read should be given more attention. It is the duty of the management to give every possible assistance to the buyer in this work. The time is not far distant when in large stores an expert will devote his or her entire time to studying what customers read and the type of books that they will buy in quantity.

Formerly and even today, the average book buyer buys what he thinks will sell and in quantities that he guesses advisable. This buying practice in many lines of merchandise has become a tradition. Critical study of the reading interests of customers will take the place of guesswork as a basis for a buying program. Sales records and forecasting are the basic factors in analyzing what the future customer demand will be. Sales records are a necessity in future successful book merchandising. It may be true that in a small store intimate knowledge will perhaps make sales records unnecessary. Yet even in this case they will be valuable in order to prevent buying books that will not appeal.

*A sixth function* is invoice supervision. Care should be taken that buyers make regular inspection of their merchandise. They should carefully inspect their invoices as to discounts.

#### **Importance of Merchandising Functions**

Successful book retailing is largely a matter of performing successfully the merchandising functions. These functions are much the same in the small store and the large store. They are too important, and too much hinges upon their successful performance, to leave their operation to the guesswork of buyers. It is the duty of the small merchant to take charge of these functions himself or to delegate the duty to an efficient subordinate.

In the performance of the merchandising functions the merchant or the merchandise manager should act as adviser and not as dictator. Suggestion brings better results than dictation. If the buyer's judgment is over-ruled or little heeded, usually he will not only take it with poor grace but is apt to disclaim responsibility when his department fails to show a profit. If suggestions are made, the buyer is not made to feel that his legitimate activities are being hampered. It is better to allow the buyer to make a few mistakes and profit by experience than to rob him of freedom in the selection of merchandise.

#### **The Successful Booksellers' Requisites**

Successful merchandising depends in a large measure upon careful gathering of facts, their analysis and their proper interpretation. It results from a close study of retailing facts by careful and comprehensive methods for the purpose of discovering rules of procedure or action, determining the best merchandising practices and formulating sound and wise merchandising policies. All this demands a mind that is thoughtful, logical, clear and patient in seeking for facts.

**PRESIDENT KIDD :** It seems to me that Dr. Brisco mentioned some things that could be taken up in the Round Table, viz., stock turnover, cooperation, and an analysis of figures. They are the vital things.

As to the undeveloped opportunities, I think that the average bookseller now has realized the importance of such events as the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, and I doubt very much that among this group of booksellers, especially the larger ones, if there are any that haven't a well selected stock of business books. I am sorry that Dr. Brisco's friend didn't start with Brentano's, because our reputations as intelligent men would not then have been jeopardized. The paper was most welcome, and it was most interesting, and we will gain a good deal from it.

The next speaker is Dr. James L. Dohr, who will talk on "Accounting and Finance," of the School of Business, Columbia University, and the author of "Cost Accounting," "Theory and Practice," and I feel that from him we will gain a great deal of valuable, technical knowledge. Dr. Dohr.



# Accounting and Finance for Retail Booksellers

James L. Dohr

*Professor, School of Business, Columbia University*

## Importance of Accounting and Finance

UP to the last quarter of a century, American business has been characterized by a rather widespread disregard for accurate records and efficient methods of finance. I am at a loss to assign a cause for that condition. I suspect, however, that among other things, the instinctive aversion to the keeping of records and books of account was one of the most important factors. Books and records involve figures and for the most part, human nature does not like mathematics of any kind. A general feeling prevails that book-keeping is non-productive and a necessary evil. It is difficult to use proper methods of finance without adequate records.

In several investigations I have been conducting, I have encountered some interesting facts about business records prior to the year 1900. As an illustration, I want to read a passage from Andrew Carnegie's "Autobiography" which illustrates my point. Mr. Carnegie says:

"As I became acquainted with the manufacture of iron, I was greatly surprised to find that the cost of each of the various processes was unknown. Inquiries made of the leading manufacturers of Pittsburgh proved this. It was a lump business, and until stock was taken and the books balanced at the end of the year, the manufacturers were in total ignorance of results. I heard of men who thought their business at the end of the year would show a loss and had found a profit, and vice-versa. I felt as if we were moles burrowing in the dark, and this to me was intolerable. I insisted upon such a system of weighing and accounting being introduced thruout our work as would enable us to know what our cost was for each process and especially what each man was doing, who saved material, who wasted it, and exactly who produced the best results.

"To arrive at this was a much more difficult task than one would imagine. Every manager in the mills was naturally against the new system. Years were required before an accurate system was obtained, but eventually, by the aid of many clerks and the introduction of weighing scales at various points in the mill, we began to know not only what every department was doing, but what each one of the many men working at the furnaces was doing, and thus to compare one with another. One of the chief sources of success in manufacturing is the introduction and strict maintenance of a perfect system of accounting so that responsibility for money or materials can be brought home to every man. Owners who, in the office would not trust a clerk with five dollars without having a check upon him, were supplying tons of material daily to men in the mills without exacting an account of their stewardship by weighing what each returned in the finished form.

"Our strict system of accounting enabled us to detect the great waste possible in heating large masses of iron."

The last twenty-five years, however, have seen a rather startling reversal of procedure. During that time there has been a tremendous increase in the size of business organizations and an increase of competition in practically all lines of business. Particularly in the manufacturing field, there has been a development in efficiency and a tendency toward large scale production. Business men generally have come to require more information in connection with their operations in order to meet their competition on the best possible terms. The Federal and State income tax laws have been potent factors in the development of adequate accounting records. Widespread increase in Governmental supervision of business has also contributed to better ac-

counting. The tendency toward large scale production has caused greater capital requirements with a result that large quantities of securities have been sold to the public. The resulting public interest in business has made for better accounting records and reports.

Improvements are now evident on every hand. For many years the Interstate Commerce Commission has prescribed uniform accounts for steam and electric railways. The state public service commissions have prescribed similarly for utilities of various kinds including gas, water, telephone and electric light. In the industrial field, accounting records are today substantially better than they were twenty-five years ago. In this development manufacturers' associations have played an important part. The wholesaler has felt need of better records and in many lines of business the improvement has been marked. Perhaps the least improvement has occurred in the field of retail merchandising.

I think the time has come for substantial improvement in the retail field. Here competition is keener than it ever has been before. The mail order houses have increased their business by leaps and bounds. Various movements have been made toward direct-to-consumer distribution. The department stores have greatly increased their business. The most recent development is the chain store which has substantially intensified competitive conditions in the retail merchandising field.

It seems to me that the prospect today for all retail merchants is competition of a more serious kind than has ever been experienced before. All of the agencies to which I have referred are bent upon developing their businesses, and it seems perfectly clear to me that next decade cannot but witness the elimination of the less efficient agencies in the retail end of the merchandise distributing system.

In the competitive struggle, accurate records and sound principles of finance are of undoubted value. The keener the competition, the greater the necessity for accurate, quick and sound decisions in administration. Such decisions must be made with a full knowledge of all pertinent facts. No single factor is of greater importance in efficient management than a good system of records.

The question naturally arises as to

what are the possibilities of better accounting records for the retailer. The question might be put in this form: "What *can* the retailer do toward developing accurate and efficient records?" I am inclined to think, however, that in this form the question is erroneous and that it should be rather "What *must* the retailer do?" Business, like life, is a struggle for existence, in which only the more efficient survive, and there is a close relationship between efficiency and good accounting records. This is as true in the retail merchandising of books as elsewhere.

The problem for the book retailer seems to me to be something like this: "How can sufficient records be provided at a minimum cost?" It is not difficult to provide records which will give the necessary information but where the expense of record keeping must be kept at a minimum, the problem becomes much more difficult. In some ways the problem is most difficult to solve in the small business. I should like to outline what I consider to be a fair working minimum of records and then to suggest means of securing the outlined goal.

#### Basic Records

With a view to establishing a minimum of records upon which a retail book enterprise can be satisfactorily administered, I think we ought to consider what information is essential. The records should be such as to make possible the following:

1. Statements at fairly frequent intervals showing whether the business is being operated at a profit and how much that profit is.
2. Statements at fairly frequent intervals showing the financial condition of the business.
3. An accurate record of amounts due from customers.
4. An accurate record of amounts owing to creditors.
5. An accurate record of cash received and disbursed.

The minimum amount of records to secure this information would include the following:

1. There must be an accurate daily record of sales. This will include sales for cash as shown by the cash

register and sales on account as shown by the charge slips. The daily record must be totaled to show sales by periods.

2. Accurate records must be maintained of the amounts due from customers. The charges to customers should be posted daily from the charge slips to the customers' accounts.
3. There must also be an accurate record of purchases. I suggest a record in which each invoice will be entered as it is received and approved. The record should show the date, name and amount, with columns to show the date of payment and an additional column for return purchases and allowances. In making payment on creditors' invoices, it is always desirable to pay specific invoices and to indicate such payment in the purchase register. Accompanying this record should be a similar record of return purchases. The amounts entered in both records should be posted to the creditors' accounts. The purchase record should be summarized to show total by periods.

The first problem in the accounting procedure is to bring the record of sales and purchases for a given period together to determine gross profits. The difficulty with the comparison is that the sales record shows what has been sold while the purchase record shows what has been purchased. It is necessary, therefore, to give consideration to the inventory on hand at the opening and closing dates to get figures which are comparable.

4. To prepare a statement of profit and loss, then, it is necessary to know the amount of goods on hand. This could be accomplished by the maintenance of a record on each article in the store, showing quantity received and quantity sold. I am afraid, however, that the maintenance of such a record is beyond the average bookstore. The alternative is to take a physical inventory, and I think it might be possible to take the inventory at frequent intervals, if the taking of the inventory is placed on a scientific basis. It is surprising how easy it is to take a

physical inventory if the methods are sound. I suggest that instead of an annual inventory that it be taken at least quarterly. This, however, is something to be decided on the basis of actual experience. The inventory may be priced at cost or at selling price. If the latter method is used, the percentage of "mark up" must be deducted to place it on a cost basis. The cost of goods sold can then be determined as follows: opening inventory plus purchases, minus closing inventory, equals cost of goods sold. Subtracting the cost of goods sold from sales as shown by the sales record gives the gross profit.

5. An accurate record of daily receipts and disbursements should be maintained. The receipts give a little trouble. Receipts from customers will be entered in their accounts to show what balance, if any, they owe. The disbursements, however, require classification to show the various selling and administrative expenses. At the end of the period, the expenses as shown by the cash should be subtracted from the gross profit to get net profit. In this connection it will be necessary to bear in mind that certain expenses are paid only once a year, and that in statements of profit and loss for a shorter period, it will be necessary to take into consideration a portion of the annual expenses such as taxes, insurance, depreciation, etc. Payment to creditors should, of course, be posted to their accounts.

On the basis of the foregoing, the retail bookseller should know at frequent intervals how profitable his business is. I think it appropriate to suggest at this point that analysis be made of the results so obtained. There are two things in particular which I think should be determined. The first of these is the merchandise turnover. Roughly, this may be determined by dividing the purchases by the average inventory. The importance of the turnover lies in the fact that the higher its rate with a given investment, the greater will be the profit. The other thing which I have in mind is an analysis of the profit and loss statement in the terms of a dollar, which will show how the sales dollar is divided as between





*Sam Loweree and P. Austin Murkland of the J. H. Sears Co. with  
Mrs. Louis Levy and Mrs. F. A. Clinch*

cost of goods sold, the various selling expenses and net profit.

#### Departmentalization

The records outlined above will show the total gross and net profit for each period in which the business operates. If I were in the retail bookselling business, I would want to go beyond this. I would divide the goods which I sold into a number of groups. For those booksellers who handle other commodities, a class should be established for each particular kind of commodity. As for the books themselves, I think they could be divided into groups on the basis of their character.

With this classification established, I would proceed to keep a classified record of sales so that I should know not only the total sales but also the sales of each group. In a like manner I would classify the purchases of each group. Finally, in taking inventory, I would divide the inventory into the same groups. With this information before me, it would be possible to tell not

only the total gross profit but also the gross profit in each one of the established groups. I would then know what products were profitable—the ones which should be “pushed”; and the ones which should be discontinued, if possible.

I think I would go a step further and attempt to classify operating expenses by the same groups. Some of the expenses could be so classified quite easily. Others, like rent, light, heat, insurance and taxes would have to be pro-rated to the groups on some special basis. For instance the rent of the store might be pro-rated to the various groups in proportion to the space required for each.

With this information, it is possible to establish not only the total net profit but also the net profit in each of the groups. I realize that I am now suggesting something which you may consider beyond the realm of possibilities because of the limited amounts you have available for book-keeping expense. I suggest it, however, in the hope that the time will come when you will find it possible and desirable.

### Budget

I think I should mention the use of the budget in connection with the accounts and the control of finances. A budget merely means the substitution of carefully planned financing for haphazard methods. It should be distinctly helpful in controlling the operation of the business, particularly such an operation as purchasing. However, I have a feeling that the use of the budget is not quite within your means, at least at the present time, inasmuch as it involves a considerable amount of additional bookkeeping. It is possible, however, that the time may come when it can be of use to you.

### The Use of Accounts

Business in times past has been characterized by insufficient bookkeeping. The development of a good system of records is only one step toward improving the situation. In addition, the management must learn to *know* and use the results obtained from the records. I have frequently seen excellent accounting systems which were of little value because they were not understood and used.

To illustrate, I think your books should be helpful in connection with the following:

1. The development of profitable phases of your business
2. Advertising in appropriate amounts
3. Advertising appropriate goods
4. The discontinuance of unprofitable lines
5. The determination of what additional purchases should be made
6. The reduction of operating costs
7. The proper use of your available space
8. The cutting down of losses.

### Improvement of Accounts

I think that a suggestion or two ought to be made as to methods for accomplishing the goal outlined above. I appreciate fully the difficulty under which you labor. Bookkeeping involves expense and your expenses must be kept at a minimum.

To accomplish the foregoing, I think that your Association might be distinctly helpful. It should be possible for you to place the matter of improving your bookkeeping in the hands of the Association. The Association could then draft forms; issue instructions for the keeping of the

records; and might even go so far as to employ an expert who could assist the members generally. It will, perhaps, occur to you that there are objections to this procedure, but I would go even further. I would use the Association as a means for disseminating the financial information so obtained. The old suspicion attaching to the exchange of financial information is rapidly disappearing, and I believe that on experience, you will find that all the members of your Association will be benefited by such exchange.

I have just one other suggestion for the actual accomplishment of the goal which I have set forth. Frequently bookkeepers are capable of keeping records once they are designed and started, while they do not have the faculty of planning and initiating records. With this in mind, I think you might be able to solve your problems by securing the assistance of a public accountant for a short time to guide your bookkeepers. This would not involve a great deal of expense, and I think would make for a decided improvement.

### Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion I have merely indicated in a general way what shall be done. Much has been left unsaid. If I have been successful in bringing the problem to you I shall feel satisfied. In conclusion just let me say this—Nature's law is the "survival of the fittest." This is true in business as elsewhere. To be of the "fittest" and to survive in the competitive struggle, you must know the facts of your business. This means adequate records. Further, you must learn to use those facts in the control and administration of your business. This means intelligent management. Finally, in your particular line of business you must work together, for as Benjamin Franklin once pointed out "those who do not hang together, hang separately!"

I want to emphasize just one more thing. In my experience I have frequently encountered excellent accounting systems which were 100 per cent useless, because the administrator, or official declined to use them. There is nothing to be gained by keeping an accurate record if no attention is paid to it. I urge you by all means to study and analyze the results that you obtain.



I would go so far as to suggest that your Association undertake to help its members in attaining this goal. It wouldn't be a very difficult matter. Simple, accurate forms could be developed and your Association might do something towards helping you to use them. I suggest also that thru the Association you exchange information. Of course, many people don't like that suggestion, but nobody was ever hurt by an exchange of information. Every time it has been tried it has been found beneficial to everybody.

I suppose that some of you face the problem of record keeping without knowing just how to start it. You can hire bookkeepers who can keep records once they are started, but who could not start the records. If somebody will show the aver-

age bookkeeper the records necessary and how they should be kept, he will have no difficulty in keeping them, but if you hire him and ask him to develop the records, he will not be able to do it.

For that reason, I think the Association could be distinctly helpful to all of you.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Professor Dohr's paper has been exceedingly interesting. I am sure that most of you know that we have already more or less followed his suggestion as to simplified form of accounting and bookkeeping, a form which Mr. Crowell worked out, and which I think was excellent. Unfortunately, all haven't taken advantage of the opportunities, and I think that it is an excellent thing that Professor Dohr has recommended again this very vital matter.

## Advertising

Howard W. Dickinson

*Author of "Primer of Promotion"*

THERE are three things which I have wanted to do all my life: run a local newspaper, own and operate a bookstore, write a book and get it published, and then write another. The first half of the last is all the accomplishment that I can claim. I did make efforts in the other directions, however, quite a good many years ago. I learned that the old Marietta Book Store in Marietta, Ohio, was for sale, and the owner of it learned that I was interested, or thought he learned that, and came to me and proposed that I buy his store. It was a very alluring idea. But unfortunately, he wanted some cash! He needed it, and my proposition then was only to give unsecured notes, and the transaction fell thru.

The same thing happened later after I had been contributing a few local items to the old Northampton *Herald*, now defunct—perhaps deservedly defunct! But it was a newspaper, and every newspaper has possibilities to an enthusiast about newspapers. I wanted to buy that paper. I won't repeat the story, but it was exactly the same story! That institution also needed some cash.

So to make a living, I finally got into the advertising business, because that had something to do with writing and publishing, but really because I found a job there—which is the rather unfortunate way that people get into occupations which they follow for years, and out of which they get with difficulty.

I can't tell you people what is wrong with the retail book business. The probability, however, is that you know too well what is wrong with it.

I well remember a gentleman who was conducting an electric appliance business some years ago. That was before current was quite as available as it is now, or quite as cheap as it is now. He secured an enthusiastic young advertising manager. This young advertising manager was all pepped up over the lovely product he had, and all enthused over the remarkable future of electric appliances and their convenience in the home and all that sort of thing. He went to his chief with an ambitious program, the idea being, "Here is this magnificent story. Why aren't we telling it?" The chief told him that this was wrong for the electric appliance business, that there



were still a great many places where it couldn't be sold, and the people weren't educated up to it and couldn't be educated up to it rapidly, etc.

The next day the young man came in and said, "I am leaving."

"Why are you leaving?" said the boss.

"Why, you sold me completely out of my job. An industry that hasn't any possibilities of sale in it is no place for a vigorous young man to work."

That happens often when we devote too much stress to what is wrong with an industry. I don't know what is wrong with the retail book business, but I have been told what is wrong with the publishing business, and I swear, I can't see why a bright, wide-awake young man can enjoy being in any business as he enjoys being in the publishing business if what he told me about it is so!

There is so much that is right in the publishing business and right in the retail book business that it might be a good idea to review some of those things.

#### **In the Booktrade's Favor**

In the first place, both of these industries are manned by selected personnel, both publishers and booksellers. Many a man goes into either of these lines of business with a taste for books, a fine sense of values that gives him the satisfaction of feeling even in the hardest parts of his strife to make a living that he is doing something he can be proud of, a genuine, educational work, contributing to the betterment of the world. That is a tremendous advantage. Sometimes it is a handicap because it often makes it hard to appreciate the legitimacy of popular demand, and the profit in it.

The book industry is a good deal like the university. It is teaching, and people who teach often find it very difficult to be taught. The book business is being taught by its customers not as rapidly as it should be, and the university is being taught by its pupils, how to teach and what to teach.

One thing is lacking in the book industry, and that is sparkle. That probably is the fault of book advertising by and large. I want to give you some figures that were given to me by a friend coming from the Dartnell Corporation. They may surprise you a bit. They show the rela-

tions of advertising appropriations to total sales in various classifications:

Book publishers	10.75 per cent
Automobiles	2.16
Automobile Accessories	6.19
Building Materials	5.07
Men's Clothing	2.25
Women's Clothing	3.1
Financial	.57
Furniture	4.7
Musical Instruments	4.84
Electric Refrigerators	3.8
Jewelry	11.

That shows the book publishers as spending money in advertising with reference to their total sales at the highest percentage of any except the manufacturing jeweler, and he only one-quarter of a per cent more.

Another thing that is fine, interesting, and important about the book industry is that you have this Association. No one here can conceive of what this Association will have done ten years from now if it continues to have the loyalty of its members, because cooperation is not a voluntary thing that we get into if we are so inclined; it is a law of nature from which we cannot escape. The more we put ourselves in tune with this law of nature, the bigger the opportunity is for cooperation.

I wish there were another word that meant the same thing, because this word "cooperation" has been so bandied about and in so many cases it has meant, "Come on, you do what I want you to do," that we can shudder at the word. But the idea of operating in conjunction with the other fellow, to give worthy merchandise, that is one of the basic laws of nature, and there is no escape from it except by personal extinction. The nearest thing to an escape from cooperation that isn't personal extinction is to go and be a hermit somewhere, and that is not life.

There are two kinds of cooperation that are conspicuous at the present time. One is the association like this, and the other is the merger. The object of this type of association is to bring the people the message of your most selfish thoughts and they will bless you, because the most selfish thoughts of any group of people who are selling an important and useful product are to sell that product. It is commonplace that only by selfishness one can benefit the

world. That is the place of the ego in the great structure of the universe.

We are benefactors if we are in business. We are promoting something, whatever our feelings and temperaments are. We may be grouches, we may be soreheads, but still we have got to be benefactors, and that is a true and practical truism, and that makes it necessary that advertising should come into this picture of what you are presenting to the public.

The book publishers advertise liberally. These figures that I have given show that. Whether they advertise well or not is another question. Whether this advertising counts as it should or not is another question. Lots of people say it doesn't. I don't know of any kind of advertising that I have seen and heard criticized so much as book advertising. I have taken a fling at it once or twice myself, which I am not going to do here.

The book publishers are advertising not their business so much as advertising something that has a transient sale. If they advertise a book by Booth Trankington, there will be no repeat sale to that person unless he buys a copy and gives it to a friend. A large proportion of the national advertisers advertise something either of big value that will stand a considerable amount of publicity, or something that will repeat. You advertise a cigarette or a breakfast food, and you are advertising to a habit of coming back and buying that same thing, and so it is that this kind of product will stand gigantic campaigns.

The local bookseller has an entirely different problem from the other local merchants. His appeal is to the intellectual people. He wants to broaden it; he doesn't always know how. He can't afford to use the local papers lavishly in advertising any one book. He can't always afford to carry that book in stock.

The local bookseller can advertise a book having a big sale. But the great objective of his advertising should be to show the public that the bookshop is a delightful, interesting place to come.

I used the word "sparkle" a little while ago. So much advertising is done without sparkle, cold, mathematical statement of facts and values. It appeals to this instinct or that instinct. People think it is the thrift instinct. But when a man puts



*Marion Humble carried her favorite trade paper even on the sands*

a little sparkle into it it succeeds so much better that there is no comparison. One trouble with advertising is that it is so good that it is wasted.

Many industries have combined. Some of the manufacturers have formed an association; in some cases the retailers have formed an association. One of the surprising facts in recent years has been the interest that people who have taken their courage up in their hands and have advertised uninteresting things have succeeded in getting from the jaded public. Think of Southern pine. What is there about southern pine? It is just a durable hard wood, some times full of pitch. But the southern pine dealers and the southern pine producers have advertised it. To start, they might be very suspicious of any possibility of interesting their public. But it has had an undoubted effect on their industry. Southern pine, cement, glass containers, "Wash the baby" soap, "Clean up the place" paint ideas coming in from all corners.

Now, don't think that the public isn't



ready for another, and another, and another? In the first place, community effort in advertising pays well in the industry advertising only to itself. Of course, it pays better in the industry advertising to the public as well as itself. You have an idea which has been presented to you of a selected book once a month. That is a splendid idea, there is no doubt about that. But it is sound, because this idea can be made to pay if it never pays a cent, provided it can get even a small start towards driving or luring more people into the habit of going to the bookstore.

In fact, while I take off my hat to an economist, I do know that we often think things are a waste when they are not, because we have the wrong measuring stick as to what advertising and promoting effort should do.

The booksellers, the book publishers have got to know something about styles in literature. Books are the dress of the mind, we might say. That is not a very good metaphor, but there is an idea there, and books are read so that people can understand other people. The biggest lead towards success is in understanding other people. The finger of scorn has been pointed at the egotist so much that we forget that he is the guy, crude, rough, terrible tho he may be, who really has pointed the way to advertising and to promotion. He has shown that he could succeed in getting somewhere even tho he does it offensively. Perhaps you remember that play "The Show-Off." We sat there and laughed at this guy who was strutting around saying "Sign on the dotted line," but it was psychologically consistent that the play should end up with that fellow putting something big over.

#### The Importance of Self-Advertising

The egotist has shown us the importance of talking about ourselves and understanding ourselves and each other. We find this strange, paradoxical situation which I hinted at a moment ago, that here is an American public, driven at once a week by a hundred or one hundred and fifty pages of advertising in the *Saturday Evening Post*, more or less in *Liberty*, *Collier's*, etc., by almost an equal number of pages in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *McCall's*, *Delineator*, etc., by 30, 40, 50 page newspapers that have that

many pages because they have to have them to carry the mass of advertising, and we are absorbing it, simply because the more interests we have, the more easily we absorb another.

Most of us think of speed as destructive. We think of the hurricane, the tornado, or the flood, and we think when we embark on a process in which we speed up our business that we are putting ourselves in danger of a tornado or a flood. So the efficiency man comes in, the man who talks waste and the elimination of waste. If he is an intelligent efficiency man, he wants to eliminate as much waste as he can so that promotion will have a bigger chance. He doesn't expect to make money by elimination of waste.

Money can't be made by saving. Many a man forgets that profits come from spending, and not from saving. The savings bank account is a fine thing, because it means some money, it means you have something to start to do something with, but it is by speed alone that we buy safety in business against competitors.

Profits come from spending. Many a merchant has thought he has made a profit when he was only starving himself of some business necessity. One of the most expensive and profitless things that there is in business today is the unintelligent elimination of waste. There is a temperament that gets that in its mind, "I don't dare to do this progressive thing because it will be costly, that will be wasteful," and he doesn't get anywhere.

I am going to take the liberty of reading a few words from this little book, because they express what I want to say right here: "Here is a water tank with a number of holes in it. The water has to be pumped into it. If it is left awhile the water will all run out. This is very wasteful, and should not be tolerated. How can we keep the tank full? There are two ways. First, seal up those holes so that no water can come out, or line the tank with some substance which will not let the water thru. Second, increase the water supply so that as much water will come in as can run out. Suppose we run a pipe to the tank from a steadily flowing spring. Then we shall not need to worry about the leakage. It is impossible to avoid waste in promotion. Sales work, advertising, hit where they hit. It takes several strikes to make a hit. If



a salesman has as good a batting average as a big league star, he is a star salesman. No, promotion cannot be done without waste.

"Economy with no loss in speed can add somewhat to profit, but speed is the only cure for waste which can be depended on for progress without net loss. If I plan to operate so as to have no waste, I shall fail, no two ways about it. It cannot be done. The only possible adequacy in life is thru surplusage. It doesn't matter what we want or how we plan, nothing is enough unless it is surplus, that is, nothing except the length of a foot rule or some such measuring device. A baseball bat must have a surplus of strength. A motor car must have more than enough power in order to have enough. The idea of connecting the leaky tank with a perpetual spring is the only sound idea of promotion, because it is impossible to stop completely the leaks in your tanks. To accomplish things, surplus power is the only assurance of success. It generally takes more power than we think, but with surplus power we can do more than we expect."

#### Freedom of Trade

If you will think back a few years you will realize that quite a number of years ago there was an era of trust formation. Then there was the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, and the era of trust busting, because the motive back of the original trust formation in that period was the idea of saving rather than the idea of promotion. Now we are in another era which we don't call the era of trust formation, because if there are any appearances of restricting competition and interfering with the free movement of trade these mergers cannot be made. But the idea back of the new mergers is the idea of outlets, of promotion, of selling more goods.

General Motors is not a manufacturing organization, but a group of industries looking for outlets. In Detroit the other day I was very much interested to hear about the new DeSoto car. An enormous plant is being built in connection with the Chrysler plant to build this car. A new company has been formed of which Chrysler is head. But the new DeSoto car has nothing to do with the Chrysler car. It is not to be handled by Chrysler agents. I am told that the automobile business today is

almost entirely concerned with outlets; that is why the automobile industry is comparatively low in advertising percentage, because it is devoting its energies to these outlets. The greater part of the advertising of the automobile is not listed, because it is done by telephone, "Aren't you ready to buy a new car? Don't you want to look at a Packard? Let me come up and show you something," and in calls by the salesmen, and in letters. I don't know whether you get as many letters as I do, but my mail looks often as if I were a constant buyer of new automobiles. More outlets, more outlets, more outlets.

#### The Benefits of Outlets

We may say that the book business will not stand more outlets, but that it needs more attention to the full benefit from these different outlets. I want to tell you one more little story.

A short time ago I had a job looking into the conditions in the refrigerator industry for a friend of mine. I found an important refrigerator manufacturing and selling concern which was trying to save its business from the inroads of electric refrigeration, a thing that cannot be done, in my estimation, because the market for high grade refrigerators seems to be vanishing. The company felt like insisting on advertising high-grade refrigerators more vigorously than ever.

Among us we were able to focus on this idea, and I think something will come of it that the market for low priced and medium priced refrigerators is bigger than ever, even tho the market for the expensive refrigerator selling for \$100, and over has practically vanished. It does not take profound research to know that the man or woman who can afford to spend \$150 for a refrigerator, and would spend that much ordinarily, will be today more interested in electric refrigeration.

The ice companies are waking up. They are going into the appliance business, very earnestly and very vigorously. They are selling ice boxes or refrigerators just as the gas companies sell gas ranges and the electric companies sell electric ranges and toasters. And all those things, tying up the retail refrigerator dealer, the refrigerator manufacturer, and the ice company on the sale of low-priced good refrigerators for the use of ice, will, I believe without any



*Stanley Remington, Treasurer of the Association, elected to the Honorary Fellowship*

doubt, build an enormous amount of business, perhaps more business than ever for refrigerators in this coming period of the next few years.

The parallel I want to make with that is that I believe, not necessarily that there is a great market in cheap books, but that there is a greater market for the retail bookseller among what he might consider cheap people. They aren't necessarily cheap, but they are different from the old booklovers that habituated bookstores. They are just getting the idea of books; some of them are being led to it thru business books. Some of them are being led thru a growing habit of reading periodicals. People are trying to make up their minds what this thing we call life is all about. They are more eager about that subject than they ever were in the world's history.

Go into Brentano's or any great bookstore, and, if you haven't kept track of it, you are astonished to see the great amounts of space, the whole alcoves or double alcoves that are given to books on spiritualism, or psychology, or psycho-research, or philosophy, on what life is about, whereas, only just a few years ago all any bookstore would have on those subjects was one little shelf.

It is the same way with business books.

Is the appetite for books of all sorts growing faster than the ability of the bookseller to reach out and satisfy that appetite? Is the bookseller more intent on selling what he wants to sell, what he likes, or is he more intent than he ever was on a book because it can sell?

There are two reasons for liking a piece of merchandise. One is because we are men and women of culture, and we like a thing because it is good. Another is because somebody else likes it, and that somebody else may not be so far off as we in our literary pride may think he is. There may be values in some of these cheaper popular books which have had such an enormous sale that we don't see, not only in pleasure given to the readers but in a sane message to some people.

A little while ago I had a talk with my old friend Walter Vincent of Wilmer & Vincent, theatrical manager. He is a man of fine taste; he likes fine things; he has artistic sensibilities. Somehow or other we got to talking about the play "Abie's Irish Rose," the play that all the critics condemn. Walter said, "Howard, 'Abie's Irish Rose' is a good play, make no mistake about that. It is a good play. I don't like it, you don't like it probably, but it is a good play—a play that will draw people thru a theater door in crowds—a good play from the box office point of view, and further it has something in it that gets under the skin of people."

Do we like our merchandise? Do we like all our merchandise? Do we like a thing because of its intrinsic beauty and virtue? Do we also like a thing because other people like it, and consequently it is good for us?

PRESIDENT KIDD: There are many innovations in Mr. Dickinson's speech, and I believe it is up to us to utilize them.

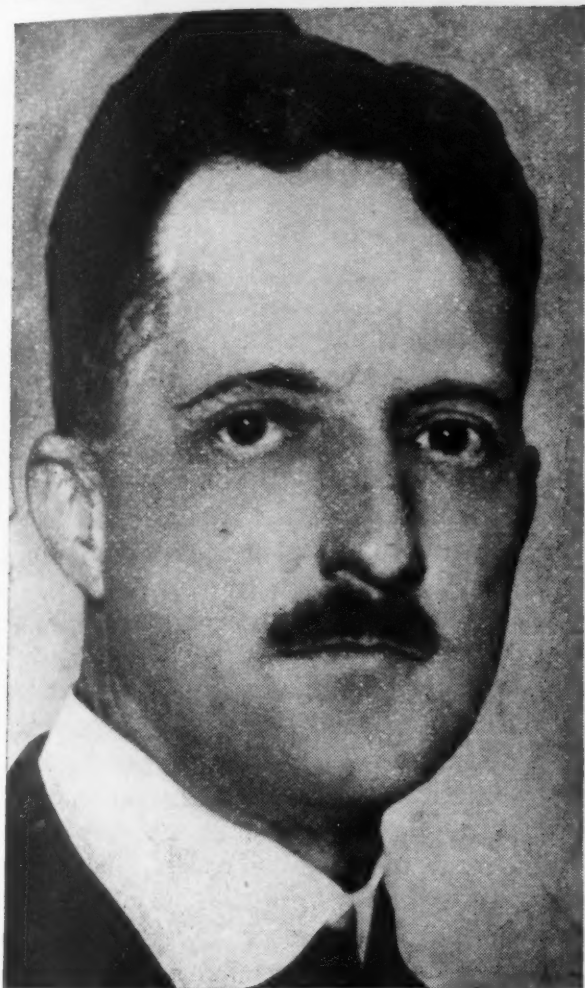
Before you leave I shall ask Mr. Melcher to give us his fellowship report.

FREDERIC G. MELCHER: Nine years ago at Philadelphia we began a plan to recognize personality in the book business.

It is a simple, but reasonably effective method to recognize the contributions that old members and new make to the general cause of bookselling.

During the last year one of the most beloved members of this fellowship, now





*Paul Elder, of San Francisco, elected to the Honorary Fellowship*

grown to thirty-two members, has passed away, and I think we feel a satisfaction that we were able in this simple way to voice our appreciation of him. Walter Lewis's contribution was one of the considerable ones to American bookselling. He was not only a great bookseller, but he had a fine influence on the spirit and growth of these conventions. He was the first man among a great and important department store group to come into the Association.

I should like those in the room who are already members of the Fellowship to come forward to welcome the new members into the Honorary Fellowship.

Some people with perfect selflessness throw themselves into the Association work, for the benefit of all. It is with a feeling of great pleasure that we recognize that kind of service and ask that Stanley Remington come forward.

We are also able in this way to send messages to a distance, because this is not an Eastern organization or a Metropolitan organization, it is a national organization.

This year we have opportunity to honor a man whose bookstore is famous for attractive presentation of books, and his lecture system. We honor his spirit and sacrifice and the hard work he put into that building up of the San Francisco and Bay Counties Association. I take special pleasure in announcing that Paul Elder, of San Francisco has been elected to the Honorary Fellowship.

We also began nine years ago at Philadelphia a plan for bookselling promotion. This idea, which all the booktrade has carried along so well was launched and carried forward by the Executive Committee at that time. It is particularly appropriate, it seems to me, while we are again at Atlantic City, because it was at Atlantic City that we first received reports of the bookselling enterprise, that we are able to welcome into the Fellowship one who was the President of the Association at that time, one whose devotion and far-sightedness gave the first impulse from the booksellers' side of the book promotion committee, Eugene Herr, of Lancaster.

[Adjournment.]



*Eugene Herr, Past-President of the A.B.A., elected to the Honorary Fellowship*



TUESDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 15

# Buying—Good Practice

Joseph A. Margolies

*Brentano's**Mr. and Mrs. Margolies*

**W**HEN Mr. Meyers asked me to speak before you on buying, he thought I could speak for three-quarters of an hour, but he knows very little about my ability, and certainly, he didn't consider your patience.

I am going to take up what I call the mechanical end of buying first, the way we do it at Brentano's. Of course, I don't mean that you should apply it to the letter, because we buy for very large stores, and while the small shop may get little out of it, I hope what he gets will help him.

When the publisher presents certain new books to us, the buyer makes a record of them on a slip of paper. We use a slip printed in pad form; it makes it easier to handle. The buyer makes this out himself so that he can remember what the book is, the author, the title, the edition, if more than one edition of the book is published, the publication date, the publisher, the price, and then we have a classification under "Subject." In our stores

we have our whole stock sub-divided into—well, I have never counted the divisions, there are so many of them—but each book as it is bought is automatically placed in that department by the buyer. He sometimes makes a mistake, and in that case, the clerk in charge of that particular stock will call his attention to it.

From this slip we make two duplicate typewritten cards. A typewritten card is easier to read in the first place, and it has a more or less official stamp. On that card we mark down the date of purchase, in fact practically the same information as on the other slip, except that we specify the number of the original order. Then this card is sent down to the clerk in charge of the particular stock in which it was classified, and another card, a blue one, is given to the girl in charge of the information desk. That is one of our most important features.

Unfortunately, in New York they don't show us books as early as they do in stores outside of the city. They think because the books can be received in three or four days that they don't need to show us the book until just before publication.

The information girl, therefore, has a complete record of every book that is bought, with the classification mark, and when the book comes in it is sent to the department in which it is classified, and a sample copy of each book is sent to her desk so she can draw the card out of her file and note the fact that the book has appeared. If the date has lapsed, say for instance a book is supposed to be published on May 15th and it isn't out that day, she immediately tells the buyer about it, and he gets in touch with the publisher.

The card that goes to the clerk is our stock card. On that card the number of the original order is given. From that quantity the clerk gets a pretty good idea as to whether the book is important, whether to give it a large display, or

whether to give it a secondary or third place in the display of stock.

When the stock begins to run low, after the book has been out some time, he sends the card back to the buyer with a notation of how many copies are left. I have a couple of sample cards here. Here is a book, for instance, that was published on March 1, 1928. The original order for that book was 25 copies on March 1st. On March 8th we had three left of that book. That card was immediately sent back to the buyer, and he, noticing that within that short space of one week 22 copies were sold, ordered 50 copies. That card went back to the clerk with the notation that 50 copies were ordered so he might expect them. On the 17th, which is a little over a week more, only six copies were left of the three and the fifty that were reordered. That showed a great activity in the book.

It is very important for the buyer to know, what makes a book sell. Is it a review, or some special advertising that the publisher has undertaken? In this particular case it happened that Harry Hansen in the *World* gave two successive columns on two days to this book, which created quite a demand for it. Taking that into consideration, the next order for the book was 100 copies. The next order came along; this was on March 17th when the 100 copies were ordered. The next order was on the 10th of April, a lapse of a little over three weeks. That meant that the book was not selling quite as well as in the beginning, and the next order for it was only 50 copies.

Then another strange thing happened. One of our ministers began to talk about the book, and within ten days what was left of the order, and of the new 50 copies—was only 25 copies, and an order for 100 was placed. By that time the book was pretty well established. It is a controversial book, a novel. Our orders for it up to the 10th of May were as follows:

Original order	25
Next order	50
Next order	100
Next order	50
Next order	100

and then because the minister spoke about the book and created the demand for it

another 100, because it sold out in a very short time.

I want to give another example. Here is a book that was published on January 11, 1926. The original order for it was 100 copies. On the 8th of February we had 40 copies left out of the 100. That showed the book was very active, and an order for 100 was given as a reorder. After that we ordered 50, 100, another 100, then 50, etc., and it is interesting to see that this particular book was bought eleven times during 1926. The book was published in January, so that means the book was bought just about once a month, a little less than that. In 1927 the book dropped, of course, and we bought only 25 copies during that year. The first order of January 7, 1927 was 25 copies. Those lasted until August 22nd, which was quite a long time. The next order was 5, and those lasted until October 19th, and the last order for it on May 9th this year was only one copy. It didn't deserve any more, because if we could sell only 25 copies that year, one copy is enough, just for call. It is a book for which we probably will have calls.

This illustrates the method of reordering. Of course, they are active books. We don't always succeed in reordering 12 times a year, or even ten times a year. We'd like to do it, but we can't. That would be a very happy state of bookselling if you could buy for a month's supply and not get stuck.

Very often not knowing the sale value of a book we will give a very small original order. I can't stress enough the necessity of feeling out the possibilities of a book before you plunge into giving a large order. This incident happened last week. A new detective story was published by an author who had a successful book many years ago. My original order was for 25, to the great disappointment of the publisher's representative. The day of publication we sold 19 copies of that book. It didn't hurt my pride in the least to call up on the telephone and ask him to send another 100 copies. Some people here can't call up the publisher, but they can certainly use the telegraph, and they will find that the cost of telegraphing is not quite so much as overbuying and having a lot left.



Reordering is perhaps the healthiest sign in any business. It has a very fine effect on everybody in the store. If you buy a big lot of books and build a four-stack or a five-stack of the book, and four or five a day are sold—from a four-stack that would really take off only one layer—you must give it that space because you bought quite a lot. But if you buy in smaller quantities and you stack them in ones, single stack, you take off four or five copies and it makes quite a hole, and that has a very fine effect on the clerks. They actually see the book move. They don't ordinarily know whether you are interested in pushing that book; all they know is that the book has come in. They don't know what discount you get on it. I don't like to recommend it as a thing to follow, but some times it might be a good idea to let a book run out of stock for a day or two so that when it comes in again they will really be glad to see it.

#### **Placing the Book in the Store**

The next important thing in buying the book from our point of view is placing it in the store. We like to feature the better selling books more than those that have only a small sale. Some people have an idea that the good seller is going to sell anyway, so what is the use of pushing it, what is the use of giving it window space, what is the use of giving it space in front of the store? They put out the stuff that does not move so rapidly. That seems to me very wrong merchandising. We must always take advantage of the publicity that a publisher is sending out on a good selling book, the advertisements he is placing in the newspapers. If a book is well advertised and there is a lot of publicity on it, it has an easier sale if you put a stack in front of the store. When the customer comes in he sees it, and immediately the sale is put thru.

The publisher's argument (and every buyer has heard it) that a small order may be bad for him because he will not be able to have copies on hand if the book sells seems to me a very peculiar one. It is almost like asking the bookseller to underwrite his business. If a publisher feels that the book is going to sell out so fast, why doesn't he take the whole chance and print

enough copies so that he will have plenty to go around?

The ability to buy books intelligently depends a great deal on the individual store for which one is buying. The city in which a store is situated and the location on the street in that particular city should play a very important part in deciding what to buy for it. It has always seemed to me that to buy for a large store is a little bit easier (I hope Mr. Brentano is not listening to this) than it is to buy for a small shop, because in the small shop you must eliminate so much that the large shop doesn't have to eliminate. So I think the small stores have a much harder time. But it seems to me each store should know exactly what it can use. Certainly, a department store book department couldn't use the same type of book that, for instance, a shop in Greenwich Village can use. While the department store may sell a lot of "White House Cook Books," the Village store will probably run to Cabell and Anatole France. So it is necessary really to try, according to the location you place yourself in, to cater to the clientele that will patronize your particular shop.

The small shop must, of necessity, specialize a great deal too, while the large store can generalize. In our store we are prepared to get calls for books on astrophysics, or even books on the last word in Auction Bridge in rhymed couplets. In other words, the large store does not need to worry as to which books to buy, as almost all general books published must be represented, but the small shop has the difficulty of always eliminating from its orders those books that it feels sure cannot be used in that shop.

Another very important thing for the large bookstore, in fact, any bookstore that employs anybody outside of the owner, is to measure the strength of your staff. That is a very important point. Just what does your staff like to sell? Some clerks can be instructed to sell certain books, but not all, in fact, not many can be instructed. They each have their personal likes and dislikes, and the best thing is to let them alone, let them develop their own clientele. We have a variety of tastes represented in our shops, and each one seems to develop his own personal clientele. Often a customer will come in just to say "Hello" or





*Mrs. Nestell of the New York University Bookstore in Wall St., Albert Crone of the Publishers' Weekly, Frederick D. Lacy of Putnams, Dorothy M. Borges of the New York University Bookstore and Helen T. Fay of the New York State College Cooperative Bookshop*

to have a little chat on the latest literary gossip, but in the end, that little chat will lead to a sale if the clerk is particularly interested in his business.

We all have our experiences with clerks who specialize in selling one particular book. I know of one instance where a man who worked in our place asked me to buy him quite a lot of copies of a book on Fascism. He was very much interested in Mussolini. The book wasn't a popular one at all; it didn't sell. But I took a chance and bought him five copies. He sold them the first day, and then I had to buy him some more. Unfortunately, he left and got another job and left three copies of the book, and to the present time we still have them. You have to look out for that.

On the question of buying new books—that seems to me the hardest thing to do, to size out the new book and see just how

it is going to go. When it comes to new books, the buyer mustn't swallow completely all the sales talk and advertisements of the publishers. He must measure up his own ability, taking into consideration the location, the staff, the particular clientele that he has, and buy accordingly.

Even the reputation of an author is some times not a guide. We know of many cases where we fell down on buying books written by authors that had had successful books before. Sometimes an author writes a first book, and it goes over very big. One must always be careful of his second book. Somehow some authors haven't any more than one book in them. The first may be autobiographical, and in the second book they have nothing to say. I think the first order for a second book by an author must be very carefully weighed.

Then again, we have the authors who have written a number of books but didn't

succeed until about five or six books were published. Thornton Wilder had a book published which had just a small sale among the literati. Then, of course, we can mention authors whose first book simply couldn't be kept in stock, but when the second book came along—that was another story!

#### **The Flood of Fiction**

The bane of the buyer's life these days is fiction. One publisher this spring has brought out about 18 novels, and the spring isn't over yet. The peculiar thing about that organization is that they were so busy getting out these new books (some of them are very doubtful of success) that some of their best sellers didn't get a chance to get printed, and for weeks, sometimes as long as three weeks, those books were out. It seems to me a condition of this sort is not a very healthy one.

How is the bookseller going to meet this tremendous output of fiction? We have to take into consideration the price-cutting of the department stores; we have to consider the circulating libraries, which eat up I don't know what percentage, but quite a lot of the fiction. I am not trying to say anything against the circulating libraries. I think they are very good. But certainly, they hit the bookseller. We have to consider various book clubs, and other channels. Then when you consider that the life of the average novel does not exceed more than two or three months, certainly, it seems a very serious situation, and about one-tenth of all books published belong to this class.

Last fall we took away two tables from our fiction department and gave it over to more profitable books, and we are planning to take a little more space away. To try to sell a poor novel is almost hopeless. Somehow you can sell almost any other kind of book, but a novel when it is dead certainly cannot be moved at all. It seems to me that if this situation keeps up and fiction is going to be published in large quantities it will get to the point where the bookstores will be compelled to take fiction only on a protected basis. Certainly, they can't afford to take the many chances in buying fiction they have before. This would be quite a revolutionary step in merchandising, but I think it will come eventually. I don't know who said "Fewer

and better books," but it seems to me that the slogan should have been changed to "Fewer and better selling books."

A book is a matter of taste. What one may consider good another person may not consider good at all. But certainly, a good seller is a good thing to give booksellers. It doesn't matter whether it is "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" or "The Sheik"; but at the present time, with more and more publishers coming into the business it seems that almost any manuscript may be published. If it is turned down by one house, another one will surely take it, while with more discrimination this would not occur, and only the best books would be published.

Buying of limited editions is another sore spot. It seems that the craze has advanced so far now that some publishers are not satisfied with one limited edition of a book, but they will bring out two or three limited editions. The result is that most stores have plenty of limited editions on their shelves. A limited edition should be limited. If it is left on the shelf, it isn't limited any more. I once figured out the number of copies George Moore signed, and it amounted to about 20,000 copies, and he already had signed 20,000 books of his own. It is to the credit of Bernard Shaw when he was asked about signing copies of his new book that he said he wanted people to buy his books for what is in the book and not for his signature.

#### **Fads in Books**

Then there are fads confronting book buyers. There was the fad of the crossword puzzle, which was all right, but the imitations weren't. There was the fad of the question book, which was all right, but try and sell one now! There seems to be a lack of originality among publishers when it comes to these things. Everybody follows the successful thing, and then they quit. About six months or a year ago books on ships were popular. I think every publisher published a book on ships. Now they are doing the same thing with books on crime.

Booksellers could be a great help to publishers if they were only consulted more by them. After all, the bookseller comes in direct contact with the buyer, the ultimate consumer. The publisher is so tied up with his own lists, the only thing he sees is his



own line and the successes of other publishers. He seldom hears of the failures of other publishers, and he is likely to make the very same mistake, while, if he consulted with the bookseller, I believe that he could get certain help. Certainly, it would be worth his time. Some day I believe that every wise publisher will have a bookseller on his editorial staff. I think the bookseller could advise him on how to publish the book, and advise him with regard to the jacket, etc. It is only thru cooperation of the publisher and the bookseller that this book business can really be placed where it belongs among the great industries of this country.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I am sure that we have all enjoyed Mr. Margolies' remarks, and I hope that tomorrow at the various Round Table meetings certain phases he has brought up will be discussed. There is only one thing I'd like to know, and that is, how long a bookseller could retain his point of view if he were in the employ of a publisher. I don't think very long.

The next speaker is Dr. Herbert W. Hess, of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He has written two or three books, an exceedingly interesting one which I had the pleasure of reading myself, "Productive Advertising," and I found it very much worth while.

## Selling

Dr. Herbert W. Hess

*Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania*

WE in universities often hesitate as we go out into public life in our attempt to apply our principles to a specific industry or business. It always fills me with awe, to attempt to apply some of these theories of merchandising to a specific business, the details of which I do not have in mind.

Speaking of awe reminds me of a most interesting class session that I had a few years ago in advertising wherein I was attempting to get at the time in evolution when awe crept into the consciousness of the human race, for certainly, those of us who are in advertising recognize that we do have to work upon human nature, and we want to utilize at times these natural attributes or tendencies which we possess. I rather wanted to discover where awe might have crept into the consciousness of the human race. I asked the question, and didn't at first succeed in getting any kind of an answer. Presently, however, a fellow in the back part of the room arose and said, "Well, I believe that awe first crept into the consciousness of the human race when Adam first saw Eve!"

We ought to appreciate that every field of activity has certain fundamental conceptions that we must constantly recognize

in any program that we might take up. In the evolution of business the field first to develop a technique was advertising. In our universities in the field of distribution advertising constituted the first courses. Then there was a recognition that salesmanship might be reduced to a science; and yet, we have numerous universities and schools of business administration that have not yet apprehended the technique of salesmanship.

Merchandising means that every man in business has the encumbent upon him to think in terms of potential markets. He must know his community with respect to its susceptibility to the sale of books, and his advertising is determined largely by this analysis.

For instance, I happen to be connected with the evening school, the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. There are within my own classes in merchandising some four hundred men. I don't think that there is a single bookman in Philadelphia that ever analyzed the potential market for books of that group. I will venture to say I have done more than any of them to sell books. Within five weeks I will give a list of some twenty-five books that I have read. The students will take



those lists out, and they will buy some of those books. I will warn them, "Now, don't lose the list. I won't send you another one if you write for it. I want you to keep it." Before September there will be at least ten men writing back for those lists. They remember them.

I am saying that in every community there are specialized groups, and those groups can be appealed to intelligently. So merchandising is eternally tapping the potential markets of your community.

I was rather interested in the previous speaker's discussion. He said, for instance, that a book was successful because it was a controversial book. There will be thruout all times, as long as we are human beings, controversial books. "What does a controversial book really mean?" From my point of view, a controversial book is one that has tremendous significance to an individual who is breaking away from certain things that he has thought out as true or real, and the next step in his way of thinking may be determined by some particular book.

Advertising has a wonderful technique. Salesmanship on the other hand means a study of the individual. You begin to persuade me that a particular book or point of view is tremendously significant, and that by possessing that book somehow or other I am getting out of that book what I demand. It may be poison, it may be imagination, it may be analysis, or what-not; nevertheless, that book can make a contribution to me.

Now, unless you are selling scientifically to me as an individual, you are not considering salesmanship a real science, a definite method of approaching the customer as a prospect. A good many young men or women in selling are inclined to sell that which they like; it seems to me that we ought to begin to develop a group of young men and women to sell books in keeping with the mentality of the customer.

The fact that a customer comes into the store with a definite book in mind doesn't necessarily mean that I can't sell him two books or three books before he goes out. Why? Because if I begin to appreciate him as an individual, as a prospect, it is up to me to understand him in terms of his mental life. I have got to know my product.

I wonder how many booksellers, those who have stores, use reviews of all these books so that the sales people think in terms of them. I don't suppose a week goes by but what people are asking for bibliographies and what particular books I'd recommend for certain occasions. To say that the populace is not hungry for books isn't true, because they are. But I don't feel that the sales people have grown to the point where they recognize the professional character of the work that they are trying to accomplish. It will take all kinds of specialized sessions and group meetings at a convention of this kind to accomplish this.

So you have got to know your product. I know things can happen when people know their product. I know it. I have in mind a certain corporation, third of its kind in the world, wherein they have these old foggy ideas about the sale of their particular high-priced article. Finally a young man got in there and said, "I am going to send down to the school of business administration and get five men and start them out on the sales force. We are going to train those people, for they have got to know our product thru and thru."

He managed to get that over. Those five young men started out. They received the intensified training that I have just indicated, and every last man has exceeded the quota of the old man that he displaced, a thing infinitely beyond anything that they had ever imagined. Why? Because those young men were so trained that they didn't do anything but think in terms of the quality of the product that they were trying to get over. Why, if I personally am sold on a book in the sense that that book moves my whole life and gives me a new perspective, you mean to tell me that that isn't fire to be passed on?

As has already been brought up, a book may not be successful as far as the masses are concerned, but a good salesman is going to sell books to individuals.

Then, knowing yourself. That seems a simple thing. These things are pretty dear to my heart. We have representatives from large corporations right there at the university this minute, and these boys are seniors. They are looking for positions. They go into the office there, and they just can't sell themselves. They don't believe

in themselves. They have not been compelled to make a summary of their traits in terms of assets. Fine positions are opened up, and they pass in one door and right straight out the other. Finally some one young fellow who has vigor and who has confidence and who has been willing to go out and test himself experimentally tells what he has done, and tells somewhat of the attributes which he believes he possesses, and that individual walks out. He gets his job.

I tell you, the person is significant. We must look upon personalities as very interesting, as very significant. Those people who sell goods from a scientific point of view are supposed to possess certain innate traits and tendencies and attributes. I have a right if that individual comes to work for me to insist that he manifest certain of those traits in the selling of my goods.

We are constantly receiving new ideas. Books are largely the means by which our consciousness is enlarged, so that as I look at a book I don't assume the point of view that a lot of you do, that eight are coming in to buy it, or ten are coming in, so we will order 100 more; that wouldn't be my psychology at all.

If I know that volume takes an imaginative point of view, is going to appeal to the fellows in my class so as to make those that have little imagination see the imaginative implication of it, if I know that that book will accomplish that purpose in a human life I am going to have that individual read that book. I am not going to wait for the populace to declare that the book has merit. Personally, I ought to be expert enough to see the implication of that kind of book in the life of the other fellow.

And so, as I have explained, books stand in a constant relation to the individual in his evolution. The books that I read at nine and ten are not the books that I want to read now. Many of the books children of my age read at nine or ten would not be good today. They were the best we had at the time.

So I hope some day you will get experts at work who talk before this group, the psychologist and the biologist. If we could only know the psychology of childhood and then sort out all the books which have been beautifully written and which if read

by children will develop the fancy, which gives interest and curiosity to life, look at the increase in the sale of books that you are going to have as the years succeed.

Then some of you will get busy and say to the architect, "Look here, Mr. Architect, it isn't true that books are obsolete. See to it that in the arrangement of our rooms we can have a library."

From ten to eighteen years of age youngsters have ideas of heroism. The club spirit that begins to assert itself. You can teach them about Nature. They like to observe; the collective instinct begins to manifest itself. Adolescence is upon them. Sex begins to motivate. You know that young people are crazy about young people. That is why you have fraternities and sororities. Romance begins to assert itself. Idealism plays a part in the individual life. Religion becomes of consequence. Controversial books can be sold to these young people. Drama and poetry have a place at that particular period.

At twenty-two to thirty home life begins to be important. Home planning is important. You can sell literature on children, on interior decorating, education in general. Take the men in our night schools. Most of them are twenty-two to twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age. They have gone out into the great world and haven't been as successful as they might have been, and are coming out to school in order to increase their powers.

A good many of you here have perhaps read Dr. Patten's book called "Mud Hollow." I can take that book, and take a group of young men and women in a class, and within one hour I will have the most violent controversy, and you will see every last one of them sensing the remarkable scientific implication involving both biology and psychology in the situations that are developed in that book. Yet, as I have said, the average individual will pass it by as inconsequential.

I do believe when the history is written, you will find "Mud Hollow" perhaps the first effort to attempt to reduce a novel to those terms which apply to the structure of ourselves involving, as I have said, biology and psychology with a little economics mixed in.

So analysis has its place. Imagination has its place. Philosophy has its place. You



are all aware of the book which presented popularly an appeal to the philosophical side of our lives. To college students we assign those books apart from the class room. They get them and read them and stay after the hour and discuss them. They like them. But the point is that some of us who are interested in the development of the individual are fortunate enough to be able to experiment enough to know we can sell some of those books.

Right now in this city you have got a group of men between thirty-two and forty-two years of age who are beginning to assume places of economic responsibility wherein the executive point of view needs to be brought into play. Where do you have scheduled books which indicate that if an executive reads these books that somehow or other the executive attitude of mind is furthered and strengthened so that he buys the books for what they will do intellectually in order to enable him to accomplish business purposes.

Then your next important attribute after earnestness and honesty is enthusiasm.

I think it is Henry W. Prentiss, of the Armstrong Cork Company, who has a magnificent address on personal selling, and he puts it in this way: "Enthusiasm comes from two words 'in' and 'Theos' meaning 'in God.' 'In God' literally means that I am so related to life that I live in the wholeness of things, and then I am a recipient of the goodness that is constantly about me. But when I become intellectual, I split up, and I analyze. I lose my sense of the wholeness, and I fail to emit the great spirit of enthusiasm."

Accordingly as I sense those values, do I begin to appreciate the contribution which you, a group of men, make to the community, in terms of the body, the mind, the soul, and the spirit.

PRESIDENT KIDD: In Dr. Hess's lecture there seemed to be many interesting things which might be discussed.

[Adjournment]

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16

Wednesday was devoted to Round Table discussions, reports of which are included in the account of Thursday's meeting by means of the chairmen's reports to the General Convention.

THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 17, 1928

## Reports of the Round Tables

### I. Religious Bookstore Group

Joseph V. Pilkington, *Chairman*

*Cokesbury Press, Nashville*

JOSEPH V. PILKINGTON: The Religious Booksellers feel that a plan presented by Mr. Murray, of Macmillan Company, is so important for a million dollar market that we have agreed to let Mr. Murray talk to you in place of the time we would take. Mr. Murray of Macmillan.

MR. MURRAY: This is the first time that a proposal from the religious book wing of the booktrade has come to the floor of the convention.

In order that I may talk to a motion be-

fore the house I'd like somebody to move the adoption of the resolution that I shall read, and some one else to second it. This is the resolution:

"Moved that the American Booksellers' Association in Executive Session assembled, do now instruct its Executive Committee to open negotiations with the Publishers' Association, and if a satisfactory arrangement can be reached to foot the expense it will entail, to engage a competent man's full time to operate as press bureau during the next twelve months using the religious





*James Lott of the New York University Bookstore, Fred Tracht of the University of Chicago Bookstore, Harry Meese of the University of Pittsburgh and Alfred Hartog of the Columbia University Press*

press, the booktrade, the seminary professions, the ministers, and machinery of the parishes and whatever other facilities prove available.

"First, to induce churches to put a minimum sum of \$50 into their parish budgets annually for the minister to spend solely for additions to his professional library, and

"Second, to induce churches to introduce or expand a loan library service with the object of making the reading of books on their religion a standing practice of their whole adult membership."

[It was moved and seconded that the above resolution be adopted.]

There are at least 150,000 churches in America. Cut the number down to 100,000 going concerns; 20,000 adoptions of this \$50 budget item would mean a million dollars' worth of business annually. This is repeat business. Churches that would take this step would keep it up.

Forty per cent, or 40,000, would mean \$2,000,000 worth of business annually. If you got the whole 100,000 in line, it would be \$5,000,000 a year. There is nothing picayune about the proposal that the religious booktrade brings to your attention this morning. This is a project for making new religious book readers by the million. The time is ripe for it. Why? Because to millions today the old time religion is a form of life insurance which they have to die to win. Others like the new time religion—and a guarantee goes with it that dividends will begin to be paid the day its prescribed régime is put into practice.

Enough big city ministers have been sounded out to assure such a press bureau as has been described in the Resolution abundant support from them. The same applies to the seminary professor. The same is true of the religious press. There are three separate stories to substantiate

those statements if I had time to tell them.

For the local bookstore: First, get up a list of your local parishes. Take in your trading territory outside for ten to fifty miles; in these days of the automobile, country parishes are just as good prospects as the city parishes. That won't be large. Thru the minister, get a list of four or five key men and women in each parish to put this \$50 item plan in the budget over. You can afford frequently to use follow up letters. If you can't get the minister to get this \$50 perhaps you can get him to raise it.

Here is a third suggestion, to the minister that he form groups of 12 people, or 12 households which will each agree to pay for one book, and to read all 12, keeping them going once every two weeks from house to house.

You can assure him that this plan will get those 12 households better acquainted. It is a big asset to the parish, and a big element in his successful continuance in that parish. They can have group socials in the afternoon or the evening to talk over the books.

In these days of automobiles it isn't going to be a long job to go from house to house once in two weeks to deliver, and if any of them wants to get acquainted better he can have that as an excuse for the opening wedge to make a call.

Fourth, put out a feeler in regard to a memorial library to start this parish loan business off with 250 books. Have it understood, tho, you dealers, that you get the business if it goes thru. Put thru the idea that the adult groups in the Sunday school ought to use books, not leaflets, and not just the leader give a monolog. Assure them that is the way to keep discussion from roaming all over the lot and having your audience melt away on you. The new directors of religious education will be keen to help along that idea.

Sixth, suggest to each of your key men and women while they are waiting for that annual meeting which may be three or six months hence, that they get together five or six others, and that they chip in \$5 or

\$10 apiece and start this thing off immediately. There is nothing to hinder them. No parish is going to kick. The worst kickers in the parish can't say anything. Four or five people have got a right to spend their own money.

Seventh, get the whole parish mailing list, if possible, and then try to get the idea going among particular friends of the pastor, establish what we'd call a "book credit" at your store on which he can draw for the amount of the check they give you, \$5, \$10, \$20, or whatever it may be. A minister who is on his job is making all kinds of the strongest personal attachments. Somebody has a long sickness in the family, perhaps. It is the minister who helps a whole lot to tide over the dullness of the 24 hours

a day in bed. Why shouldn't they do this for him. The only reason, it seems to me, that people haven't done this for the minister is that they haven't known just how.

Eighth. There are lots of well-to-do citizens who don't go to church, who don't pay a cent to keep up any church, but who get to know the minister. They hear him at a Rotary meeting; or he belongs to their lodge. Put up the idea to them to establish a book credit with you.

I hope you will vote this resolution thru.

SECRETARY MEYERS: Mr. Chairman, that resolution should be taken up in its proper turn by the Resolutions Committee.

MR. HERR: I move it be referred to the Resolutions Committee.

[The motion was carried.]

PRESIDENT KIDD: We will now hear from Mr. Meese, of the College Bookstore Group.

[Tho they were not announced at the Convention, the following new officers of the Religious Group were elected:

President, Joseph V. Pilkington, Cokesbury Press and Lamar & Whitmore, Nashville.  
Vice President and Treasurer, Theodore Schulte, New York.

Secretary, Harry V. Meyer, John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia.]



*Alfred Hartog,  
New President of the Col-  
lege Bookstore Group.*

## II. College Bookstore Association

H. E. Meese, *President*

*University of Pittsburgh*



Harry E. Meese

THE College Group met yesterday morning. There were about sixty members in attendance. The high spot of our session was a talk by Dr. George Parker Winship, of the Widener Library, Harvard. The subject of Dr. Winship's talk was, "College Boys as Book Buyers."

In the afternoon Wilbur Pearce talked to us about "General Books of College Bookstores." We had reports from our various committees. The following officers were elected:

*President*, Alfred Hartog of the Columbia University Bookstore, New York.

*Vice President*, Siebert W. Mote of the University of Utah Bookstore, Salt Lake City.

*Secretary*, Helen T. Fay of Albany State Teachers College.

*Treasurer*, Ward G. Biddle of Indiana University, Bloomington.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Thank you. The large city bookstore group will be reported on by Christopher Grauer.

## III. Large City Bookstore Group

Christopher C. Grauer, *Chairman*

*Otto Ulbrich Co., Buffalo, N. Y.*

AFTER listening to that very excellent plea for religious books, I say, "Almost thou persuadest me to become a religious bookman."

The Large City Bookstore Group has no resolution to present to you, so you may rest easy so far as that is concerned. In asking me to present this report, I feel that it is a great stretch upon my modesty, being the least of this Large City Group, to present a report that might very well be presented by others who could do it far more ably.

I want to say at the outset that it is a very difficult thing to boil down into five minutes what five speakers took 45 minutes

each to present, and what 75 men took a whole day to discuss.

The first thing that we discussed was the question of the Literary Guild, a matter with which you are all more or less familiar. You will recall that during the session the President announced that a committee had been requested to meet with the Literary Guild to consider a question of compromise or readjustment, and this group after discussing the question very frankly and freely left no room for doubt in the minds of the committee that the large city group at least, would stand for no compromise with an institution that had done its best to vilify the great bookselling in-



dustry of this country. There could be no compromise. Either they were right and we were wrong, or we were right and they were wrong; and we believe that we are right.

The second question that was discussed was the matter of the Thompson Plan of advertising, with which you are familiar, no doubt. After discussing that pro and con it was the general consensus of opinion that while theoretically the plan was good and appeared to be sound, it could not work out in practice as it was hoped by the proposer. There are many difficulties in the way of presenting lists, keeping them up to date, and using them under such a plan, and while the matter was discussed freely no action was taken.

The next thing that came up for discussion was the question of the Meyers Plan, the plan that has the name attached to it of our illustrious Secretary. This plan was also very fully discussed, and finally came to a vote. I may say in passing that there were about 75 members present at this group in the morning, and about 60 in the afternoon, and when this question was presented, it was discussed quite freely and frankly, and when the Chairman asked for a show of hands upon the resolution there were about 12 that voted in favor of it, and 7 that showed their hands as against it. That isn't very indicative of the opinion of the group, but it shows that there is some division of opinion.

Another question that was discussed was the question of buying, and the Chairman of this group, who should have made this report himself, made a statement which I shall quote, and I want you to know that it comes out of Boston. He says: "If you think you can sell 500, you know you can sell 250. Then buy 100. It is easy to get more, but damn hard to get less!"

There was another suggestion made that I consider quite important for you to consider, at least. You will recall that most

of these groups as they break up after the sessions of the convention, are asked to discuss the papers that have been presented, and to discuss the proposals contained in those papers.

Now, it is assumed that when a man is asked to prepare a paper on the question of buying, or selling, or advertising, that he will have given a great deal of thought to that subject before he appears before this body, and it is safe and fair to assume that he will approach that question from the point of view of the people to whom he is speaking, and the business involved. Is it fair to ask people who listen to one paper after another, each perhaps 40 or 45 minutes in length, and all perhaps rambling at times a little bit from the subject assigned

—is it fair to ask those people who have listened to the paper for the first time immediately afterwards to discuss that paper intelligently without having some of the facts actually before them?

It was suggested that in the future when persons are asked to prepare papers for the convention, that they send to the committee a draft of the subject, the salient points upon which they expect to talk, the things that they wish to drive home, and that these then be printed and passed out to the members in advance of these group meetings, so that when we break up into these respective groups we can act intelligently and discuss with some fair show of intelligence the matters that are presented for consideration.

These are, I believe, about the principal things that were discussed by the group. I may say, however, that they were not the only things. We discussed everything that relates to bookselling from the question of buying and selling to the honesty and dishonesty of clerks. So you can see that we were a pretty busy group.

PRESIDENT KIDD: We will now hear from Eugene Herr on the Small Town Bookstore Group.



Marion Dodd,  
Prominent Member  
of the College Group

#### IV. Small Town Bookstore Group

Eugene L. Herr, *Chairman*

*L. B. Herr & Son, Lancaster, Pa.*

I HAVE talked too often and too long in the sessions of this convention to take up very much time this morning in reporting to this group. I simply want to report that we had about 25 in attendance, and thru a three-hour session which was followed closely by those present and participated in by everyone in the room, the problems and the possibilities of small city book selling were discussed and developed.

We gave considerable time to the discussion of Mr. Meyers' book selection plan. I won't make any definite report on it at this time, but shall, if it seems desirable, inject that group's impression at the time it may come up in discussion as a resolution.

There were several other points brought

out which I shall bring to the attention of the Executive Secretary and the new President in due time.

There was a very definite feeling that the group might be enlarged very properly and very profitably in another year. In addition to the small town bookstores, the regional bookstores in the larger cities might be invited to join in with the small city group.

Every one present both this year and last year felt that the discussion was exceedingly profitable to them, and they hope to see the meetings continued in future.

PRESIDENT KIDD: We will hear from Frank L. Magel on the Department Store Group.

#### V. Department Bookstore Group

Frank L. Magel, *Chairman*

*Syndicate Trading Company*

THE Department Store Group had an interesting and I trust a helpful discussion of the various topics emphasized by your competent Program Committee.

One additional topic that produced enough vital comment to be worth mentioning was the possibilities connected with the installation of circulating libraries for children. I won't attempt to give you any of the details of that discussion except to say that as the result of the discussion, two buyers have told me that immediately on their return from this convention it is their intention to install circulating libraries for children in their departments.

The topic that produced the liveliest comment and discussion was Mr. Meyers' monthly book selection plan, and I am very happy to report that my group endorses the plan unanimously. We think it is a wonderful scheme, and we hope this convention will endorse it, and that it will be put into operation.

My group has no resolution to offer, but its Chairman has a suggestion to offer that might be helpful to future Chairmen of group committees, and that is that it might not be a bad plan to organize some sort of battalion or corporals of the guard whose duty it would be to see that the delegates were aroused early enough in the morning to have their breakfast before lunch time. Then I think it might be well also to subsidize the local police department or some other organization to see that the corporals guard got up to wake the delegates.

PRESIDENT KIDD: The next business before us is the report of the Resolutions Committee. If there is any one present who is not a member, it will be necessary that he retire before we begin this very important part of our session.

First, we will have the report of the Auditing Committee. Mr. Sanford. [Not present.]

While we are waiting I will read a couple of telegrams:

"Important and official business detains me in Washington. Please convey to the officers and delegates my best wishes for a successful and progressive convention. D. J. O'Connell, Member of Congress."

Here is another: "Best wishes for successful convention. Sorry not to be able to be with you this time. A. Kroch."

I see Mr. Sanford is here now, and we will have his report.

B. E. SANFORD: This year the accounts, to save time for the Auditing Committee so they could have a few pleasures, were audited by Vollmer & Thompson, of Atlantic City, and your Committee checked the totals with the cash book and found same correct. In that connection, we wish to call attention to the fact that last year your

Auditing Committee, two of which are on the Committee this year, recommended that the audit be of the affairs of the Association. The audit of Vollmer & Thompson covers only the audit of the Treasurer's books. We merely call that to your attention.

We have proved that the Treasurer's report is correct.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I might say that this last year the Clearing House being in a more or less formative state, our methods of bookkeeping were very crude indeed, and that beginning with this fiscal year we are installing a simple system which will be audited in the future by the same company that audits the Treasurer's report.

We will now have the report of the Resolutions Committee. Mr. Nye is the Chairman.

## Report of the Resolutions Committee

Simon L. Nye, *Chairman*  
S. Kann Sons Co., Washington, D. C.

### RESOLUTION NO. 1 :

RESOLVED, that we express our hearty appreciation to the convention committee of 1928 for the splendid manner in which the convention has been conducted and details of same carried out. We particularly commend Howard M. Jacobs, Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, George W. Jacobs, Chairman of the Program Committee, and Isaac Ottenheimer, Chairman of the Return Certificate Committee. To them and their associates, we extend our heartiest thanks. To Dr. Norris A. Brisco, Professor James L. Dohr, Howard W. Dickinson, Joseph A. Margolies, Dr. H. W. Hess, who participated, in such an interesting manner, in the presentation of papers and themes of vital interest to the bookseller; to Meredith Nicholson, Lowell Thomas, Colonel Clarence G. Chamberlain, Dr. Morris Fishbein, for their generous participation in our Banquet program, and to the J. B. Lippincott Company for the use of rolling chairs for our members on Tuesday evening, and for the gift of an historic gavel, we extend our heartiest thanks and appreciation.

To the Hotel Ambassador and its employees, we extend our thanks for the excellent arrangements necessary for our needs and comforts.

And to the following, also, who have generously provided souvenirs, we extend our thanks:

Bobbs, Merrill Co.  
Boni & Liveright  
Doubleday, Doran & Co.  
Henry Holt

Little, Brown & Co.  
National Publishing Co.  
Laird and Lee  
George Sully

Grosset and Dunlap

We extend our sincere thanks to Charles Scribner's Sons, who have furnished the Program for the convention.



PRESIDENT KIDD: Is it your desire that the resolutions be acted on as a whole or individually?

[It was voted on motion duly made and seconded, that the resolutions be acted on

individually.]

It was voted on a motion made by Mr. Herr and duly seconded that the resolution be adopted.

### RESOLUTION NO. 2 :

The report of the Board of Trade reveals a careful and exhaustive investigation of all of the problems confronting the booksellers; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we express to them our hearty approval of its report which represents the best interests of the trade; that we record our deep appreciation of its Chairman, Arthur Brentano, Jr., and its Secretary, Theodore Schulte.

MR. ABRAMSON: Does that imply the acceptance of the report of the Board of Trade?

MR. NYE: No, it is merely a resolution of thanks for their efforts.

[Carried]

### RESOLUTION NO. 3 :

The Board commends the activity of the National Association of Book Publishers during the past year in its efforts to bring about a reduction in the postal rate on books. We once again recommend that this Association adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, existing parcel post rates to which books are subject are greatly in excess of the flat rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound applicable to similar reading matter contained in magazines and other second-class matter, and

WHEREAS, such parcel post rates are substantially in excess of rates for books when sent to any point beyond the fourth zone, and

WHEREAS, such exorbitant postal rates which may be borne by the purchasers of books result in greatly discouraging, and to a large extent, absolutely prohibiting the purchase of books by the public, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the American Booksellers' Association urges upon the Seventieth Congress the enactment of legislation to effect a separate classification of mail matter for books and lower postal rates therefore, such as contemplated by Senate Bill 2040 of the Seventieth Congress, which provides that:

- (a) Mail matter of the fifth class shall include books consisting wholly of reading matter and containing no advertising matter other than incidental announcements of books;
- (b) The rate of postage on books included in subdivision (a) shall be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound or fraction thereof, with a minimum charge of three cents for each parcel and subject to the same maximum weights per parcel now prescribed by law for mail matter of the fourth class.

MR. HAMLIN, (Houston, Texas): Mr. Chairman, does that bill imply anything about a presentation card to be put in books to be delivered thru the mails? Can they say "Happy Birthday," etc.? People generally put a card in a book they are sending away, or autograph the first page.

MR. NYE: I understand that you can include the card and name of the sender and a greeting.

PRESIDENT KIDD: If Miss Humble is here, perhaps she can give us some light on that subject.

MISS HUMBLE: Gentlemen, I don't think that could be included in the bill. I think that what is to be included would have to be left to the Post Office Department to work out as it is now worked out with other mail matter. I doubt if it would be wise to put that in the bill. We

could take that matter up with our Counsel and find out what advice they have, but I think the important thing is to establish a separate classification of books with a lower rate. That must be the predominant thing.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think personally that the Post Office interprets that rather broadly, and that a card would make no difference; but written communication decidedly would.

MR. SANFORD: Mr. President, I happen to be in charge of one of the Post Office Stations, and the Government ruling

is that a customary salutation of the season, for birthdays or that sort of thing, is not written matter, and can go thru without changing the character of the package. That, of course, is subject at all times to the Post Office Inspector's ruling.

Mr. Grauer: As I understand it, the ruling says the books shall not contain anything except book announcements—no circulars can be put in or anything of that kind.

MISS HUMBLE: No advertising matter.  
[Carried]

#### RESOLUTION NO. 4 :

WHEREAS, business costs for conducting the retail business are continually increasing, the rent in prominent locations having advanced very greatly, and the general overhead of the retail business having greatly increased, be it

RESOLVED, that publishers be urged to examine their schedule of discounts with a view to a wider margin that will place bookselling on a sounder and more profitable basis. It is our firm belief that a standard discount of forty per cent would do much to accomplish this purpose.

MR. JACOBS: I move the adoption of the resolution.

(The motion was duly seconded.)

MR. WILSON: Did you say "standard discount?"

MR. NYE: Yes.

MR. WILSON: Should that not be "mini-

mum?" What does "standard discount" mean, if I may ask?

PRESIDENT KIDD: Mr. Wilson, this is our regular annual resolution, that has been passed for the last ten years.

[There being no further discussion, the question was put and carried, and Resolution adopted.]

#### RESOLUTION NO. 5 :

The Clearing House and Consolidated Warehouse have demonstrated their permanent and economical usefulness to booksellers during the second year of their operation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we urge its wider use by the membership of the American Booksellers' Association.

[Carried.]

#### RESOLUTION NO. 6 :

A new idea has been suggested by our Executive Secretary and has received the approval of our Board of Trade, subject to the wishes of the members of our Association. We present here the salient points:

1. A trade committee, headed by Joseph Margolies, consisting of five experienced bookbuyers and the Executive Secretary, will be the original selecting organization.

2. Publishers will be requested to submit books to the Executive Office, where they will be divided by the Committee Chairman and sent to the other members for reading. These books will, of course, have to be submitted on to the Bookclub, that is, some months in advance of publication, either in galley, or in manuscript. Booksellers will be requested to give a standing order of so many copies of each of these selected books.

3. Upon the selection of a book for a certain month, all of the booksellers who have placed standing orders will be notified and an order for the entire amount will be placed with the publisher for delivery to the Clearing House. Upon receipt of these books the Clearing House will ship them to the individual subscribers.



*Alice Blais and Edna Mulligan of the Boston University Bookstore strolling on the boardwalk with Howard W. Dickinson, one of the convention speakers, and Louis Greene of the Publishers' Weekly*

4. The Advertising Department will prepare advertising copy, some samples of which are displayed in this convention. This copy will consist of:

(a) The advertisement of the *BookSelection* for the month, so that there will be a concentrated effort to repay the publishers' cooperation by selling his book in such quantities as to make worth while the giving of an original long discount, and

(b) The advertising of *Bookshopping*. An effort to sell the idea that every one ought to go to the bookshops, see what the bookseller has, compare one book with others, be on the bookseller's mailing list, and buy books in bookstores. The copy will also contain the idea that should there be persons in the community who wish a monthly book service of the book club type the bookstore is in a position to give it.

The *BookSelection* will be advertised as recommended by authorities in the literary world, critics, authors, etc. The names and pictures of these people will be used. Our trade selecting committee will not be mentioned by name in the advertising.

5. The proposed schedule of discounts for booksellers is as follows:

Up to 100 copies, 40 per cent.

One hundred copies, forty-one per cent.

Two hundred-fifty copies, forty-two per cent.

Five hundred copies, forty-three per cent.

The margin between the cost of the books to the Association and the usual trade discounts will be devoted to the advertising campaign. We call attention to the



success of the Florists' Association with their "Say it with Flowers" campaign, the Greeting Card Association, and many other organizations which have greatly increased the business in their trades thru advertising of this type. We must compete, not among ourselves, but with florists, candy stores, toy shops, and the numerous other real competitors, including book clubs, that are today making sales to persons who could and should be sold books by bookstores.

The Board of Trade heartily endorses the above plan, and therefore, be it **RESOLVED**, that this subject receive careful consideration of our members.

[It was moved and seconded that the resolution be adopted.]

SECRETARY MEYERS: As I understand the resolution which was just read, it has been moved that we adopt it, and the resolution merely says that we consider the matter.

MR. MAGEL: I amend the motion to read "the adoption of the plan by the Association."

MR. NYE: May I suggest that it was the thought of the committee, that this be brought before our membership for discussion, outside of the Board of Trade.

SECRETARY MEYERS: This plan has been gone into with a great deal of care. It has been taken up by the Board of Trade. It cannot be put into operation unless the Association in convention assembled endorses it. If it will do any part of what we claim for it, and that is, become a basis on which we might compete with these persons who are now taking some business away from us, you can't put it thru too soon. If we adopt a resolution which means that we will give it careful consideration, we can't put it thru for twelve months. On that basis I contend that we cannot consider a resolution of this sort, because you are practically killing the plan for a year.

MR. NYE: This resolution was presented to get it before our membership for discussion. Another resolution can be made for its adoption. But we think everybody should be familiar with it, because it is far-reaching in its effect.

MR. HERR: Mr. President, the point raised by Mr. Meyers is absolutely in order. The plan as proposed of *BookSelection* was properly presented to the membership of the Association thru the April *Bulletin*, very concretely. The plan has, I have no doubt, been given most careful and serious

consideration by the executive officers and the Board of Trade before it was even brought to the attention of the Association. The evidence which has just been handed to us here of concrete copy shows considerable study, and actual concrete plans for putting the advertising end of the plan into effect. The executive officers are asking this convention to say "yes" or "no" to a definite proposition which has its merits and has its defects. I think the resolution should be worded to entail action, and if carried it will involve the Association in carrying on that action. If turned down, the plan will have to be dropped, and this is the time to do it, not twelve months from now. Maybe twelve months from now all book clubs will be dead.

I have had presented to me thru the little conference we had yesterday some serious objections to the idea. On the other hand, it has seemed to me since it was presented to me, as one of the most constructive plans for financing a cooperative advertising campaign that has ever been presented to the Association, the one feasible and practical means to get a definite lump sum of money into the hands of a small group who are advertising for the booktrade.

Just a cursory glance over this advertising copy seems to me answers a great many of the criticisms that have already been brought up about the plan. I would therefore move you, Mr. Chairman, to amend the resolution, that the plan be endorsed by this meeting for the Association, and that it may be made operative when the executive office has secured the consent of participating booksellers to use 10,000 copies a month for the first three months. That looks like a minimum at which we should start when the committee who has this in charge has secured the actual subscriptions of the booksellers who will participate to the extent of 10,000 copies a month for the first three months.

Eight years ago in Philadelphia we undertook to get over a cooperative advertising campaign for the booktrade between the publishers and the booksellers. We worked hard for over six months in an effort to secure \$100,000 to put over a campaign which the advertising counsel advised us was about the bare minimum of an effective campaign.

After six months we had collected only \$65,000, and in the judgment of your then Executive Committee we abandoned the plan. Of that \$65,000, as I recall it, a bare \$1,500 or \$2,000 was subscribed by the retail bookseller members of this Association, so I feel that this is the most definite and concrete plan that has ever been presented to get into the hands of the committee a sum that would result in possibly \$3,000 a month to put over a campaign.

I, therefore, move that we amend the resolution as I have indicated.

[The motion was duly seconded.]

PRESIDENT KIDD: Gentlemen, you have heard the suggested amendment. What are your wishes?

MR. NYE: Mr. President, I rise to a point of order. There is no necessity for the amendment to this resolution. There is an opening for a new resolution. This resolution reads: "Resolved, that this subject receive careful consideration from our members."

MR. MACAULEY: I'd like to move that we pass this back to the Resolutions Committee for slightly further consideration. I believe they can change this slightly so that it will bring the matter definitely before the convention. I make that motion, and that motion takes precedence over the preceding motion.

[The motion was duly seconded.]

PRESIDENT KIDD: Mr. Herr, will you take the Chair to put the motion?

[Mr. Herr assumed the Chair.]

CHAIRMAN HERR: All in favor of referring the amendment, or the previous question back to the Resolutions Committee give their assent by saying "aye" contrary "no."

[The motion was lost. Mr. Macauley assumed the Chair.]

CHAIRMAN MACAULEY: We are now on the motion made by Mr. Herr. Is there any more discussion?

SECRETARY MEYERS: I believe the amendment is open for discussion. It seems to me that Mr. Nye has brought in a resolution which calls for an open discussion. It seems also that there is room for a resolution—shall, or shall we not adopt this plan. Why not pass Mr. Nye's resolution, and have the discussion, and then have the Resolutions Committee go out and frame a new resolution while we are discussing it, and bring in the resolution, and by that time we will have it discussed and we can vote on the other one?

MR. NYE: That is the correct solution. We have prepared this resolution, but there is no reason why any member of the Association cannot present additional or auxiliary resolutions. This resolution really presents this matter to you. There is no need to amend this. It is merely a presentation of this proposition. That is what the resolution contains. So as Mr. Meyers has just said, a new resolution would be in order.

MR. GRAUER: As I understand it, Mr. Magel made or moved an amendment of the resolution, changing the nature of the resolution. Isn't it possible to vote on that?

MR. MAGEL: I withdraw my motion in favor of Mr. Herr's amendment.

CHAIRMAN MACAULEY: We are now acting on Mr. Herr's resolution.

MR. HERR: Will the stenographer please read the resolution as I presented it, or the amendment?

SECRETARY MEYERS: It is pretty hard to find it, so I suggest that we begin all over again.

MR. HERR: I agree to that. We can go back to the resolution as presented by the Resolutions Committee.

[President Kidd resumed the Chair. Mr. Nye re-read the resolution.]

MR. HERR: I move the adoption of the resolution.

[Carried.]

MR. ARTHUR BRENTANO, JR.: I should like to put a motion:



"Resolved, that the plan be adopted by this convention, and that the workings of the plan be left to the Executive Committee."

[The motion was duly seconded.]



## Let your bookseller help you . . .

He knows the good new books—and the great old ones—and his experience and advice are at your service. Your tastes are your own; let him suggest the books that will be most likely to please and interest you.

The fascinating game of *bookshopping* is played by thousands of intelligent people everywhere. You, too, will find it real fun. Get acquainted today with an A. B. A. bookseller.\* He carries in stock the choicest literature of our time—at prices to suit any pocketbook—and he will be delighted to make his time your own, without obligation.

Ask him, especially, about the **BOOKSELECTION**—a monthly service of recommended reading to keep you in touch with the most important new literary productions. The service is free.

\*Member of the American Booksellers Association. Look for this insignia.

The  
**BOOKSELECTION**  
for October is:



Ask any of these  
A. B. A. Booksellers  
to show it  
to you!

*One of the sample advertisements for the BookShopping and BookSelection campaign which the Convention voted to put into operation*

**MR. HERR:** Do I understand that the Meyers Plan contemplates the minimum that I suggested in my amendment a minute ago, 10,000 copies for not less than three months?

**SECRETARY MEYERS:** Yes, it is entirely impossible to work it on less.

**MR. GRAUER:** The resolution we are discussing now involves the adoption of the plan. It seems to me that the discussion that took place in the little group yesterday morning showed a divergence of

opinion. It has not been made definitely clear to the members of this Association that such a proposal will receive the hearty endorsement and cooperation of the publishers from whom these manuscripts should be received. It seems to me a question that involves so much, and that has been preceded by a resolution in which we ask the publishers to examine their costs and their discounts and ask them to give us the relief that we seek in larger discounts, that we ought to consider the two resolutions morally as having some relation, and that if we adopt this plan it ought at least to be adopted with some measure of support on the part of the publishers.

I am not using this as an argument against the resolution, but I am asking that the atmosphere be clarified on that point so we may know definitely, when we vote for the adoption of this resolution, that we are committing ourselves to a policy that has at least the tacit approval of the publishers.

**PRESIDENT KIDD:** I feel that if the Board of Trade handles this matter that we will have to go into that question before the thing can be successfully operated.

**SECRETARY MEYERS:** Mr. Chairman, it is obviously impossible to select one book a month from the lists of the publishers unless the publishers will let us have books, so that the thing that I feel this Association should consider is this: Shall we get anything out of this plan providing we can work it? The question of what the publishers will do, of course, is up to the operating committee. If we can't get the books, there is no plan, whether the Association adopts it or rejects it, so that it seems to me that the thing to be considered by this convention is, what can we, as booksellers, get out of the plan when it is operating?

**MR. BENJAMIN TICKNOR, (Boston):** May I ask Mr. Meyers, for the information of the convention, whether he has any reason to believe that the publishers will accept an order for 10,000 copies of



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a popular novel at 55 per cent for distribution to their own customers?

SECRETARY MEYERS: Yes, I have received from some publishers very definite assurances. For the most part, I will say that the publishers are waiting to see what the booksellers are going to do with the plan. I have had conversations with a number, some of whom have made up their minds long in advance of my call that they weren't going to have anything to do with it; others, who were willing to discuss it, and others who said that they thought that the booksellers ought to form a positive campaign instead of using a negative method of competition.

Mr. Stokes, in his letter, said that he would like to see what the booksellers would do with it. He will be pleased to give it consideration if, after it has received discussion at the convention, the convention passes it. Dutton is a firm which will cooperate. When we first started to formulate this plan I went to several others, including Knopf and Boni & Liveright, and they made no definite negative statement. They are all open to conviction providing the booksellers want to try out a positive campaign.

MR. TICKNOR: Has Mr. Meyers any definite declinations from any publishers?

SECRETARY MEYERS: Yes, very definite, from Scribner's and Appleton.

MR. TICKNOR: And Houghton Mifflin Company.

MR. HERR: Mr. President, in bringing this matter before the house for active decision, I did not do it particularly as a protagonist of the plan. There was expressed in my Round Table considerable dissatisfaction with the idea. I have heard considerable dissatisfaction with the idea expressed elsewhere about the convention. The time to express that dissatisfaction or approval is now, just as Mr. Ticknor has done. People who have ideas of that kind should express themselves so that a definite decision can be made. I can give you just as many reasons that the plan isn't sound as I gave that it is sound, but there are other people who have voiced them, and they should voice them now, and then this

body can come to a sane decision, not just smother the idea, pass it quickly and then say it wasn't discussed. There are people here who are opposed to this plan, and they should express their opinions.

SECRETARY MEYERS: I quite agree with Mr. Herr, and I feel, too, that the convention is entitled to receive reasons from the persons who disapprove of the plan

## BOOKSHOPPING

*—the thrill of  
personal  
selection*



*that gives  
added pleasure  
to your enjoyment  
of books at home*

Any bookseller will gladly introduce you to the fascinating sport of *book-shopping*—played by intelligent people who like to choose their own reading. He will be glad to show you, also, the *BOOKSELECTION*—a book selected each month for special recommendation. Examine the *BOOKSELECTION* in any A. B. A. bookshop\*—but choose in accordance with your own individual preferment from among all the excellent books which you will find there



The *BOOKSELECTION*  
for January is:



\*Member of the  
American Bookellers Association  
Look for this emblem

*Another advertisement typical of those by  
which the A. B. A. Cooperative Campaign  
will attempt to get book buyers back into  
the stores \**

rather than just statements that we can't get cooperation. There are a sufficient number of booksellers in addition to Mr. Magel's Round Table—the College Round Table passed this unanimously yesterday, the consensus of opinion in the Large City Group I feel pretty sure was more in favor than against it. There are enough book-

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sellers who feel that it is a good plan for us to ask these persons who will not co-operate with us for their reasons.

MR. WILSON: At the outset I thought this plan was very ingenious, but my reasons for opposing it are that I do not think sufficient arrangements have been made for the financial end of it. I think it would be dangerous to attempt the plan until we are surer of being able to handle it financially.

SECRETARY MEYERS: We can't make a financial arrangement for this plan until the plan is adopted by the convention; and the booksellers say that they are going to buy the books, because in financing this plan we are going to ask the bookseller who is going to buy 25 books to pay for those books in advance, just as he paid for the Clearing House service in advance. It is absolutely impossible to put thru that sort of plan until we can go to the booksellers and say, "Give us your order," and we can't go to the bookseller and say, "Give us your orders," until the convention has voted for the plan.

MR. SALTMARSH: I'd like to say first that I am heartily in sympathy, and will act in the support of this plan if I can feel reasonably certain that it has a fair chance of success. It seems to me that there are certain details, and very important details that need to be explained. It seems to me one large factor for the possible success or failure in this plan is going to be the work of the jury choosing the books. I see here on the first page of this pamphlet just handed out, "The Book Selection is made by the most experienced bookmen in America." It seems to me if the plan were to succeed, it would have to be. Is it going to be possible to obtain men or women of that calibre who will donate their services for this purpose, or are they going to be engaged and paid a fair sum for doing it? If so, is that plan feasible? Once we commit ourselves to this plan we are entering competition with two established organizations, one of them certainly very successful. It seems to me the reason for their success is largely the high calibre of the books chosen. Are we going to be able to maintain an equally high calibre? If we don't,

how can we possibly succeed, and if we do, how are we going to pick the books?

SECRETARY MEYERS: The committee is not, I am sorry to say, complete. The Chairman and one of the four members of the committee have already accepted. I think we will all admit that Joseph Margolies who has been buying books for Brentano's, not one store, but several, for some time is competent to serve as Chairman of the Committee. Will Solle, who is the other person from whom we have had an acceptance, is at Kroch's, in Chicago—but of course, all of these acceptances and every other part of the plan has been put thru on the condition that the convention passes the plan.

I have been trying to convince Mr. Hood, of Baker & Taylor, that he would be an excellent third on the committee, and I think you will agree with me, that so far as selecting books that have value to bookstores and to the public is concerned, Mr. Hood is an excellent choice. The fourth we have not been able to decide upon. We feel that the ladies should be represented on the committee, and we want a woman book buyer.

You must realize, all of you, that we did not present this plan to the Association just to have it adopted. We presented what we thought would be a helpful thing for the booksellers. To have it adopted means practically nothing. To have it work assumes 99 per cent of the importance of the entire thing, and it does not seem reasonable to assume that we are going to be careless in selecting the committee or the books, because God help me if the committee picks a dud!

FRED H. TRACHT: I am in favor of the plan as a whole, but I am wondering if we are leaving this selection merely to business men, book buyers? It seems to me that you ought to have a jury of prominent men in the literary world. I am not saying that these men are not prominent; but the selection of the other clubs that have been successful have been by a different type of men. It seems to me your jury is not complete.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think you are right. I think we could perhaps get one or two authors to cooperate with these men. The



men that have been named, are Fred Hood, and Joseph Margolies, and Will Solle, they are, perhaps, the most intelligent buyers in the United States.

MR. TRACHT: We admit that.

PRESIDENT KIDD: With the assistance of, perhaps, a literary censor, the matter might be worked out.

MR. TRACHT: Several of them, I might say, because it seems to me they should be stressed in the advertising.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Of course, their names would be valuable to the Association.

SECRETARY MEYERS: Mr. Chairman, of course, the plan contemplates the stressing of the names of these people whose names are more known to the public than are those of the members of our committee. The reason for a trade committee is this: This plan is not presented as a "book of the month" idea. We are saying to the public, "There is one place to buy books, and that is in the bookstore. We want you to go there." We recommend this book, because we feel that when the publisher has cooperated with us to the extent of allowing us a long discount, we ought to sell his book, and sell his book well for him.

But the main purpose of this plan is to put some of that sparkle that Mr. Dickinson talks about into an advertising campaign that will sell the bookstore to the people. Naturally, we have got to center the public's attention on persons who are well-known in the literary or other circles, and with that in mind, after the trade committee has selected the book for the month, we will go to various of these people, present them with the book, and say, "Let us know what you think of it."

Now, of course, because we are in the book business, we have contacts ourselves, and thru our friends, the publishers, with practically every one upon whom we might feel that we ought to call. We can do something that none of the previous book clubs has been able to do, we can call upon different people every month if we so desire.

So far as the trade committee goes, I don't care whether it stays at four or goes

up to twelve. If the convention feels that twelve people selecting this book will be more acceptable to the retail booksellers, let us have twelve. That is a matter of machinery. I feel that detail can always be worked out.

MR. FULLER: I hesitate to raise my voice against this plan because it has so many good features. I think there are two distinct sides to this. I am very much in favor of the bookselling idea. But I question the method of raising money, first, because I don't believe it will be successful, and second, because I think we are asking the publishers to carry too much of a load. It seems to me that if we feel that this bookselling plan, the idea of advertising *BookShopping* is good, that we ought to stand back of it with cash, that we ought to go to the publishers and say, "We will put up so much cold, hard cash if you will put up a like amount, and then go ahead on the basis of advertising the *BookShopping* idea." I am opposed to the plan as it now stands.

MR. HAMLIN: That is one of the points I took up yesterday, that if we want to put over an advertising campaign we ought to put up the money, we ought to put up the cash.

MR. LOWELL BRENTANO: Mr. Chairman, there are those of us who favor Mr. Meyers' plan, realizing that it has certain defects, and I know there are a great many of us who like the simplicity and clean-cut features of a plan such as the one suggested by Mr. Fuller just now, but there is one factor that I think we ought to consider. Eight years ago, as Mr. Meyers emphasized, we first brought forward a project for raising a campaign fund, and that project was a failure. Now, if we could be sure that the plan Mr. Fuller has suggested would be a success, I personally would be in greater favor of it than Mr. Meyers' plan. But what I am afraid of is this, that we will go and spend three or four months working on Mr. Fuller's plan, and then we will find that only perhaps a half dozen or a dozen will come in, and that we can't raise enough money in that way.

It seems to me that with the resolution as proposed by Arthur Brentano, Jr., viz.,



that the committee cannot go ahead until they have a minimum of 10,000 books subscribed for three months, and that after that minimum is secured that the workings of the plan be left to the Executive Committee, that at least, will insure some degree of financial stability, at least, we shall be doing something constructive. In other words, I don't think that we ought to go away from this convention leaving the thing up in the air. Let us adopt some plan that leaves us reasonably sure during the course of the next few months of starting such an advertising campaign.

MR. GRAUER: A study of this situation covers a great many angles, and we ought to bear in mind that the two great contracting parties in this thing are the publishers and the booksellers. Now, the manuscripts, in order to reach the hands of this selective committee, must come from the publishers. You have had three publishers, two or three, express themselves this morning, and one yesterday, as being opposed to the plan, which is tantamount to saying that they will give it no support and no encouragement.

These manuscripts must be submitted to a committee that will select the book. These men are all busy men. It is possible for them to examine a great many manuscripts which will have to be submitted to them in galley or in manuscript form two or three months in advance of publication. Is it possible for them to take the time to do this?

In the next place, are we certain that those publishers who have agreed to support the plan will submit all of their manuscripts? Is it fair to assume that if any of these publishers has a manuscript that he knows is going to be top notch that he will submit that to this committee at a discount of 55 per cent when he could otherwise sell it on a more advantageous discount or schedule? Let us look at all the facts in the case, and not grow hysterical over the situation. We want to get somewhere, but at the same time, we don't want to adopt a plan that is going to be hostile to the publishers, from whom these manuscripts must come.

Personally, I like the plan presented by Mr. Fuller yesterday, and reiterated today. I think if we are going to do any more of

our own business, the *bookshopping* idea is a forward step, and a good movement. Hitching on with this other matter about which there is so wide a difference of opinion is fraught with great importance, and I'd like to see it carefully weighed before we go into it. If we can bring forth a resolution to adopt the *bookshopping* plan worked out by the office, I think we will get somewhere.

PRESIDENT KIDD: If the Chair may say so, I think the detail of 10,000 copies will be the real point. If we are able to book 10,000 copies, and if the Executive Committee or the Board of Trade or whoever is handling it, is able to persuade men as busy as Fred Hood and Jo Margolies and Will Solle to take on this job, I don't think there is much question about its ultimate success.

I think that Mr. Grauer's point is well taken. If the Association is successful in getting this 10,000, and the publishers feel that they are sincere in their efforts, and it is an opportunity to open up a new and enlarged channel, I think that even those publishers that have turned the proposition down this morning might reconsider.

MR. HERR: Mr. President, I want to make a radical suggestion about this plan that I think will answer the criticisms of the publishers to some extent. This should be a cooperative campaign. We are asking the publishers who participate to put their books at 55 per cent. Now, I am asking the booksellers who go into the plan to accept the books from the Association at 30 per cent, and allow the 10 per cent between 30 and 40 per cent to go into the advertising fund, and make it a truly cooperative proposition. Change the plan to the extent of accepting the books, give up 10 per cent of your profits on this sale to carry on an advertising campaign, and then you will make it truly cooperative.

MR. JACOBS: Mr. Chairman, I hadn't intended to say anything on this subject. I have expressed myself rather freely in the Board of Trade meetings. But there is an element which enters into this which it seems to me condemns it at the outset, and that is this word "discount." We have injected the word "discount," and we have specified 55 per cent. My conception of this whole proposition is one of adver-

tising for the bookseller as a foil against the Literary Guild and the Book of the Month Club. These two organizations approach the publisher who has a book which they wish to use in their business, and they say, "We want to purchase so many copies of this book."

"What price will you pay us?"

And then a definite fixed price is quoted, the publisher presumably making his private arrangement with the author on the basis of the price quoted to the Literary Guild and the Book of the Month Club.

Now, as we are considering this proposition, we are basing the whole thing on the assumption of certain discounts allowed to the bookseller, as well as to the A. B. A., in order for us to put this proposition across, and the prime objective, advertising the bookstore, as the medium thru which books ought to be sold to the eventual benefit of the publisher, the bookseller and the author is lost sight of. Now, I think that is the crux of this whole proposition, that it is a plan to advertise the bookstore as the *bookshopping* center of a community, and I think if we keep that in mind, and if the publishers will bear that in mind and be willing to cooperate with us along that line, that we will get somewhere with this proposition to the benefit of all concerned.

SECRETARY MEYERS: Mr. Jacobs has brought out a point which I have been wanting to make for the last ten minutes. Apparently, these publishers say, "If we give you a 55 per cent discount, we are only selling our regular market at a longer discount than we usually give."

On the other hand, these publishers all submit manuscripts to the Literary Guild, saying that that is a plus sale. A publisher's expense is approximately ten cents per novel on advertising. This plan contemplates spending 20 cents or more per \$2 book on our advertising campaign. Can we believe that with this advertising campaign, plus the distribution, plus the fact that booksellers in all parts of the country are advertising and displaying the book and attempting to sell it, that that book is not going to get a larger sale than it would ordinarily have?

About this matter of discounts, I am afraid that Mr. Jacobs never read the famous five page letter of the Book of the Month Club in which they politely and

firmly stated to publishers: "You will in the future if you care to do business with us, submit manuscripts on our terms. You can classify them in three different classes, A, B, and C. A is the author who is unknown. On that book you will give us 60 and 10. B is the author who is slightly known. On that book you will only have to give us 60 and 5. C is the author who is well known, your Sinclair Lewis's, your Mary Roberts Rinehart's, and your Edna Ferber's, and as a consequence, as we can't do much for you, you only have to give us 60 per cent."

We can do a great deal for the publishers if the booksellers will all get together. I think that the publishers, after they see that the booksellers have decided that they want to try this plan, and are behind it, and after the booksellers see that say from 1000 different book outlets thru the country we have orders for 10,000 or more books a month, will withdraw their objections, because there are obvious advantages in getting a book placed as the *BookSelection* for the month.

MR. TRAVERS: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Meyers sent out a letter bringing this plan to our attention about two months ago. I should like to ask Mr. Meyers what response he has had to that letter. About how many copies have tentatively been ordered? Another thing I'd like to have brought forward is that the original order only, as I understand it, goes thru the A. B. A. Any reorders will have to go direct to the publisher.

SECRETARY MEYERS: Thank you for bringing that up Mr. Travers; we missed it entirely. The *Bulletin*, of course, was prepared as a piece of informatory mail matter, something to tell you somewhat in advance of the convention that we were going to bring this thing up. The *Bulletin* was not intended to get orders. There were possibly thirty booksellers to whom we wrote letters asking them to tell us in advance about how many orders, or rather, books, they would be willing to take each month providing, of course, that the convention adopts the plan. From those thirty booksellers we received, I should say, 15 responses. The first was from Brentano's, ordering 500 copies of the book each month. The second was



from Mr. Kidd ordering 100 copies of the book each month. The third, I believe, was from Mr. Jacobs ordering 50 copies of the book each month, but after we conferred at a Board of Trade meeting Mr. Jacobs told me that he thought that he would bring it up to 100 copies each month.

From the first 17 orders—and we got in a number of 5's—we had an average of 77 copies per bookseller. I can show you these figures, and I can show you the letters. I have them all down here at the convention with me. We have not heard from Mr. Kroch definitely and the big outlets thru the Middle West, and presuming, of course, that we can eventually sell the Boston crowd, Boston and a number of other large cities, including the entire West Coast. We have 500 retail bookstores represented in the Association, and 77 times 500 is 38,500, which is almost four times the minimum which we want.

MR. ABRAMSON: The plan as proposed, while it has revealed benefits not originally contemplated, is obviously inspired as an opposition to the prevailing book clubs, and more particularly to the Literary Guild and to the Book of the Month Club, because that was the original inspiration for the plan; and because it intended to offset the damages done to the booktrade by these clubs the plan was proposed. Pressure was to be brought to bear on the book clubs by booksellers who communicated their displeasure to the publishers. Inasmuch as some very prominent publishers have already indicated that they do not favor this plan, is it not reasonable to suppose that if a sufficiently large number of publishers take the attitude expressed by a few this morning, and if the plan becomes operative, that the unwillingness of these publishers might be transformed into cooperation with the other agencies, a thing which would defeat the original purpose of the plan, and perhaps if the publishers would indicate the reason for their unwillingness to cooperate, we would better understand this.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think you are misjudging the publishers. They certainly would not be coerced on a thing of that kind, I am sure.

MR. REMINGTON: I am speaking only as Treasurer of the Association. I think the plan as outlined is a mighty good one. You have heard the Executive Secretary say that this matter would be handled by the Executive Committee. I am in favor of this plan, provided that nothing is done until we secure money in advance paying for every book that is ordered, and that no expense be saddled upon the Association.

PRESIDENT KIDD: As Treasurer for the organization for seven or eight years, I absolutely agree with what Stanley Remington says. I believe that at least 70 per cent of the booksellers pay their bills, but it is the devil and all to get the other 30 per cent, and therefore, the whole question hinges on getting this advance payment.

SECRETARY MEYERS: Of course, once again we are faced with a matter of organization. Now, if the publishers will not cooperate with the Association providing the Association sees fit to act favorably on this plan, we can't do anything. If we don't get enough money in the Treasury to meet our bills and have that money in the Treasury before we incur any liabilities I'd be the last one in the world to suggest that we do anything.

May I speak of Mr. Abramson's statement a minute ago. This plan was not particularly devised to compete with the Literary Guild. As a matter of fact, the original basis was worked out two years ago last July before the Guild came into operation, and only four months after the Book of the Month Club was organized with what I term the then Advisory Committee on which fifteen of us sat, and on which the publishers sat. That fell thru. The following year we went to the convention with the six books a month plan, which was too unwieldy, and that fell thru.

Now we have this one before us. The plan is not proposed entirely to compete with the book clubs. I have had the pleasure of seeing a number of industries make a lot of business for themselves by radical departures from their ordinary method of doing business—the florists, the fruit growers, the greeting card people, and the neighborhood stores. That is the trend of the times. We continue to advertise on the same basis, with a few exceptions, that the booktrade advertised many



years ago. That is not progressive. Now, could we get money for an advertising campaign of this type without the *BookSelection*, I would be the first person to throw the *BookSelection* overboard, because I don't like book clubs. But Mr. Herr told you earlier this morning the amount of money that we were able to collect from the booksellers for an advertising campaign of this sort. May I ask, Mr. Herr, if \$1500 was all you collected from the retail booksellers on that campaign?

MR. HERR: Between \$1500 and \$2000.

SECRETARY MEYERS: The large sum of \$1500. I don't think, and I have talked to a number of publishers and booksellers both, that we are going to have a great deal of success in passing the hat, altho Mr. Fuller offered \$500 from Old Corner Bookstore. I feel sure that there are several others who would be pleased to contribute. But it wouldn't amount to a lot. So we have got to earn it, and we can earn it in a business-like way. We buy something and we sell it and we make a profit, and we devote that profit not only to our ourselves, but to benefiting everybody, because if there is anything in this national advertising that will attract more people into the bookstores, certainly, there is as much for the publishers to gain as there is for the booksellers.

MR. MCLEAN: Mr. President, I have been doing a little mental arithmetic here, and it seems to me that the people who are going to supply this 25 cents a copy that Mr. Meyers mentioned yesterday are the men gathered here, and the plan seems to me to be rather unwieldy. Perhaps they think differently now, and would support an advertising budget of more than \$1500. If I order 25 copies that means \$6.25 a month toward the advertising fund. I would rather put in \$6 a month for the fund for the A. B. A. to use in advertising. Mr. Fuller has said that he will spend \$500 a year, and it seems to me that the A. B. A. at this time would probably be in a more receptive mood to put up actual cash for an advertising program than formerly and when we get that money the publishers will undoubtedly put up a like amount.

SECRETARY MEYERS: I don't want to

handle the unwieldy machinery of the *BookSelection* if I can possibly avoid it, but where are we going to get \$100,000 a year? We are going to need that, and we can build the *BookSelection* up to that, and we can't get that by passing the hat. The booksellers get these books and sell them again. They do that anyway. They may sell larger quantities on these selected books. They may sell all of their books in larger quantities if the campaign is successful. That is what the campaign is supposed to do. I'd love to get rid of the *BookSelection*, but before we turn the *BookSelection* plan down let's consider the possibilities of getting enough money to put on this advertising campaign, or we will be in the fix of waiting another twelve months to get going—unless the convention cares to give the authority to the Executive Committee to carry out the plan if, in the course of, let us say, two or three months, our investigations and efforts to raise this money prove that we can't get anywhere, I think that is an easy compromise. Inside of two months the Executive Committee ought to be in a position to say, "We will never be able to collect enough money." But the convention gave us permission to start the *BookSelection* plan. Let's go.

MR. MAGEL: How any bookseller possibly can doubt the benefits that would accrue from the successful operation of this plan as outlined here before you today is past my understanding. You can't get money by passing the hat, as Mr. Meyers has said. I couldn't give any money to such a fund, but I can give wholehearted support to such a plan as this, and thereby furnish my little quota toward this effort. Many dealers, as a matter of fact, most of them, would be in exactly the same position as I.

Perhaps I know your Executive Committee and your prospective Executive Committee better than a good many of you do. The question before you is whether this plan should be endorsed by this convention and put into operation if we can get the books, and if we can get the orders. If we don't get the books, the plan does not operate; if we get the books but don't get the orders, the plan does not operate. If we do get the books, and if we do get

the orders, I am perfectly willing to put the details of carrying out this plan into the hands of men like Stanley Remington, Arthur Brentano, Jr., and Mr. Jacobs. Do you think they are going to be so foolish as to put this Association in a position from which it cannot extricate itself? Think about this thing, and give it your endorsement. That's what it needs.

MR. CARHART: Instead of being a weakness, this selection of one title a month for advertising is one of the features of this plan's strength. Those of you who have tried any broadcasting (I speak from experience) will find that the first effort in general advertising of your store, inviting people to come in for *bookshopping*, or to come into the neighborhood store, has brought results. But the broadcasting was pointless until I selected one book each month, not so many that they'd forget, but one book each month at my own discretion, it didn't matter much which book as long as it was one book to focus attention on it. I got them to listen. We must have a focus point in each advertisement. *Book-*

*shopping* is not the focus point which draws attention yet, nor is the name of your store.

There is one other feature which publishers who have not given their active consent probably haven't considered, and that is, that besides the fund which this Association will have from the discounts, there is the individual advertising of bookstores all over this country to supplement this cooperative advertising. That amount will, I venture to say, be more than double in its total the amount that the Executive Committee will spend. That sum alone is an argument which will convince the publishers.

Gentlemen, all we need to push the ball over is to stand together and push. Don't let's stand out and argue about the thing. It can't kill anybody for three months or six months, and everything that is done means that much to our benefit, and we are that much ahead if we never go any further than that.

MR. JACOBS: May I ask for a reading of that resolution so we know what we are voting on?

MR. ARTHUR BRENTANO, JR.: "Resolved, that the Meyers Plan be adopted by this convention, details of which will be worked out by the Executive Committee."

[The question was called for, and the motion was put and carried with only two dissenting votes.]

MR. NYE: Ladies and gentlemen, I am

particularly gratified as Chairman of the Resolutions Committee that this resolution as presented to you has aroused the discussion for which it was intended. We will now have

#### RESOLUTION NO. 7 :

RESOLVED, that the Central Mailing Bureau, as outlined by W. S. Thompson, of Putnams, be considered by our Association and referred to the Executive Committee for its consideration.

[Carried]

#### RESOLUTION NO. 8 :

WHEREAS, the One Above has deemed it wise to take from our midst our beloved friend and associate, Walter Lewis, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the members of the American Booksellers' Association, do hereby express our keen sorrow at the severing of the ways.

[A standing vote was taken]

#### RESOLUTION NO. 9 :

RESOLVED, that a vote of thanks and appreciation shall be extended to our retiring officers for their faithful and excellent administration.

[Carried]

MR. NYE : The above resolutions were respectfully submitted by the Resolutions Committee, Messrs. Nye, Brentano, Jacobs, Hartog, and Macauley.

MR. CARTRIGHT: Is it now in order to offer a motion upon the resolution about the Central Mailing Bureau, that facilities be provided for its operation for the members under such terms as may be desired?

SECRETARY MEYERS: It was referred to the Executive Committee for consideration during the coming year.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Are there any further resolutions?

MR. PILKINGTON: I move that the Murray Plan as presented this morning be presented to the Executive Committee for adoption. [Carried]

MR. JACOBS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to call attention to the fact that at the request of the convention I wired Mr. Thompson, of Putnams, to come here this morning and present his mail order plan, or circularizing plan, and Mr. Thompson is here, and it seems to me the convention ought to give him a hearing.

PRESIDENT KIDD: It seems to me we should adjourn at this time and start in early this afternoon, and we can then hear Mr. Thompson and finish up the balance of the session.

[Adjournment]

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 17

PRESIDENT KIDD: The first thing we will have this afternoon is Mr. Thompson's report on his Circular Clearing House

proposition. So I will call on Mr. Thompson of G. P. Putnam's Sons, and he will present his plan to you.

# The Circular Clearing House Plan

William S. Thompson

*G. P. Putnam's Sons*

THERE is nothing radical about this plan, nothing revolutionary. It is perfectly simple. But there are a good many angles to it. I thought best to put them down so they can be read to you.

Certain publishers, hereinafter referred to as Contributing Publishers, propose to establish in New York what might be called a Circular Clearing House. These Contributing Publishers will rent space and equip it properly with addressing machines and everything necessary to conduct the various operations comprised in circularizing. They will also guarantee the running expenses and divide among themselves, on some equitable basis, any monthly deficit which may occur. This Clearing House is to be under the direction of the American Booksellers' Association.

It is proposed that the booksellers of the country place in this Clearing House, under the direction of their own Association,

duplicates of their mailing lists, of customers at first, and, later, of prospects.

These lists, as received, will be transferred to addressograph stencils, and filed in cabinets in such a way that each bookseller's list will be kept intact and can be addressed as a unit. Each bookseller is to pay the cost of putting his list on stencils, about 5c. a name.

The stencils are to be, and remain, the property of the bookseller, and he is to be at liberty to remove them at any time he may see fit.

These lists are to be brought together in New York primarily as a means of getting more business for both publishers and booksellers.

From time to time they would be circularized, all or a part of them, as the case might be, by the contributing publishers on current or forthcoming books. Each bookseller's list would be circularized only un-



der his own imprint, and with his consent.

The contributing publisher who wished to circularize the lists of a number of booksellers would send each bookseller a sample of the printed matter to be mailed, setting a definite day for the mailing. The bookseller would, if he had no objection, give his written consent on a form provided for that purpose, and the publishers would file this written consent with the manager of the Clearing House, as a "ticket of admission" to the bookseller's list.

Proper means would be taken to keep the various lists absolutely inviolate, to prevent them from being stolen or copied, or even addressed without the written consent of the bookseller, and on these points each bookseller would have absolute assurance.

Each bookseller would continue to maintain his list in his own office for his own use when required. He would send in to the clearing house corrections or additions once a week, or once a month.

Each contributing publisher would pay the clearing house a fixed price for his own addressing and for any other operations. Each bookseller would be at liberty to have his list addressed for his own account at the same fixed price.

The cost of printed matter would probably, as now, be borne by the publishers. The postage and envelopes would be paid just as it is now, according to circumstances, usually by the bookseller and occasionally by the publisher.

Each bookseller would be able, just as he is now, to censor absolutely the material to be mailed over his list, to decide, if he wished to, the date of the mailing, or to decline it entirely, if he prefers. Thus a bookseller would have his list just as much under his control as if it were in his own office.

There would, no doubt, be duplications of names in the lists of booksellers in the same town or city. These duplications exist now so the situation would be no worse, and some people would continue to get circulars from more than one bookseller just as they do now. No attention, however, would be paid by the clearing house to possible duplications. Any name sent in by a bookseller would go on his list, irrespective of whether or not it appeared on some other bookseller's list. In fact, nobody would know of duplication excepting the

individual receiving the circular matter. Each bookseller's list would be a unit to be circularized by some publisher only if the bookseller had given his written consent.

Now, what are the advantages of the plan to publishers? The publishers are paying the expense of such a plan now, and some of them are beginning to realize it. They are paying the expense in imprinted matter shipped and never used by the bookseller, in imprinted matter shipped and never received by the bookseller, in transportation charges on imprinted matter, and in loss of booksellers' business which might be got if the booksellers' mailing lists could be used more intensively. Some publishers who realize these losses are willing to try this more efficient plan, for under it, instead of shipping imprinted matter on an important book to four or five hundred booksellers, the imprinted material would be delivered in bulk to this central point, where it will all be used.

Moreover, concentrated advance circularizing like this on an important book would have a vast effect on advance sales. The publisher, thru larger advance orders from booksellers, would estimate advance printings more exactly and perhaps save considerable money in the manufacture of a larger edition. He would know far ahead of publication, more nearly where he stood with regard to any book of sufficient importance to justify circularizing. Advance circularizing is now left to the booksellers. It is done spasmodically, or not at all, with consequent disadvantage to both publisher and bookseller. This circularizing clearing house would change the situation entirely from the publisher's point of view.

Now for the bookseller! What would he gain by this plan? The booksellers' lists of customers contain the cream of the book buyers of the country. The average bookseller has not enough people on his staff or sufficient knowledge of the results obtainable thru intensive mail-order work to enable him to circularize his lists to their greatest capacity or in the most effective way.

If booksellers would place their lists where they could be used by the contributing publishers under the booksellers' imprints, it is believed that the results to bookselling would be very beneficial.

Under this plan the bookseller would have his lists circularized as often as he wished. He would get from his mailing list infinitely more business than ever before. He would have no trouble whatever beyond that of notifying the clearing house of changes in his list. He would have no additional expense aside from the 5c. each for placing his names on stencils. He would not have on hand all the time a lot of unsolicited imprinted material from various publishers. Nevertheless he would be quite at liberty to mail circulars from his own office if he wished. And all the time he would have his lists absolutely under control, for the stencils would be his personal property. Moreover, he would have the opportunity to build new business by compiling and sending to the clearing house carefully selected lists of prospects. Under this plan I fully believe that any bookseller would get business he never dreamed was in existence.

Under the present inefficient and unsatisfactory system, the general tendency among publishers is to make the imprinted material as inexpensive and as simple as possible. Now in these days of fierce mail order competition, a simple and inexpensive piece of printed matter does not, it cannot, have the most pulling power, that is, it does not get as many orders to the thousand mailed as a more elaborate piece.

If this new plan were in effect by which the publisher could be positively assured that his imprinted material would be mailed, I believe the general tendency among publishers, certainly among those who know mail order, would be to prepare more elaborate printed matter to be mailed under booksellers' imprints, thereby raising very appreciably the percentage of return per thousand pieces mailed. Moreover, it would be easier and more feasible, under these circumstances, for the publisher to throw into the printed matter his whole mail order experience of what pulls the most orders, to the lasting benefit of both publishers and booksellers.

With my knowledge of mail order possibilities, I can visualize such a clearing house as this after it had, so to speak, grown up. It would have, say, a million names sent in by booksellers, a large proportion of the bookbuying element in our population. On a certain day all of these

names are circularized at once on an important forthcoming book by one of the contributing publishers, entirely at his own expense and under booksellers' imprints. Result: advance orders for 25,000 to 50,000, all to be filled by booksellers; \$50,000.00 profit on 25,000 copies at \$5 a book, made by booksellers instead of being diverted elsewhere. This doesn't compare unfavorably with any book club you can think of. Moreover, it isn't a dream. It is a real future possibility if some of you booksellers will help now to start this going, by saying that you will send in your lists.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I hope, for the benefit of the Executive Committee, to whom this problem is being put up, that there will be a general discussion. I'd like to hear from Mr. Herr.

MR. HERR: Frankly, Mr. President, I haven't given this matter the consideration that I have to some of the other questions that were before the convention, but as it has been presented, it sounds like a very sensible and feasible proposition. We all know the problem that has confronted us in all of our shops of properly disposing of the oftentimes valuable circular matter which is furnished us by publishers, and it sickens me as I think it should others, some times to have to throw things away that have cost real money, because we have not had an opportunity of disposing of them properly.

Another thing, if we can relieve ourselves of some of the machinery of doing these things and knowing they are being efficiently and periodically done all the time as they should be done, by some central agency which is our agency, it would be of undoubted value.

The matter of compiling a list is, of course, the individual bookseller's responsibility. Upon the character of the list that he compiles and furnishes will depend the results he will get. But once the list is prepared, he is assured when he O.K.'s a piece of printed matter, it will be automatically mailed out, and at the same time, the publisher is assured, having provided the matter, that it will be mailed out automatically, whereas, at the present time, it is a great gamble.

There is no doubt in these days of various



types of competition, that mail order selling is effective. I had no little success last year with the distribution of a lot of imprinted matter that had been sent to us just before the holidays, by using the plan that was made feasible by the Post Office Department. We have in our community many thousands of residents who live on R.F.D.'s, and I discovered not so long ago a fact that you may be cognizant of, and may not, living in the country myself, that if you will get from the Postmaster of any given district a list of the R.F.D.'s from the Post Office in his district, with the number of box holders on that R.F.D., you can send out circular matter at regular circular rates addressed to Box Holder, R.F.D. No. So-and-so, at Such-and-such a place, and the circulars will be delivered to the box holding residents.

I had, with a limited amount of matter that accumulated at our place last Christmas, very beneficial results, because the matter was going into the homes of people accustomed to receiving mail order catalogs, and accustomed to buying from catalogs, buying from printed matter, so that they reacted favorably, not so much in direct orders by mail, but by coming direct to the store. People came in with the circulars with their selections marked, and commented on the fact that they had received them. That shows that if you send circulars to the right people they will receive consideration. I believe that the plan that has been outlined is feasible. I don't see any objection to it at all.

Furthermore, I understand no piece of matter will be mailed out until you O.K. it yourself, and it won't be used for promiscuous circulation that might not appeal to your trade. You will be the judge of that yourself.

Personally I think, Mr. President, that the plan is very sound, and is another constructive measure of which the members of this Association should avail themselves.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Thank you, Mr. Herr. Mr. Grauer, will you give us an expression.

MR. GRAUER: I don't think I have anything to say right now.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I'd like to hear from one of the publishers. Mr. Clinch, how do you feel about it?

MR. FRANK CLINCH: Speaking unofficially, because I do not know what the attitude of my house would be concerning it, I do think that any way or means of bringing the public's attention to books, whether it is this direct appeal along legitimate lines or some other way, is a good thing in the book business.

As far as we are concerned, I think we'd want to know just what our expense would be before we commit ourselves. I think direct appeal by the bookseller to his customers is always better than just a piece of mail matter, or a general piece of advertising in his own local community.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think that from the publisher's standpoint at least, the saving in using absolutely all his circular matter when handled that way would more than offset any small incidental expense that might be attached. Is there any other discussion?

MR. MACAULEY: Mr. President, it just occurred to me that this need not necessarily be limited to publisher's material, but it would be a great saving when the bookseller wishes to send a personal circular letter to his trade. When we desire to do that it means two or three days of a young lady's time taken away from her regular routine work. But this way, you simply frame the letter and send it down to headquarters, and, of course, in that case, the bookseller bears the entire expense, but it becomes a very simple routine matter.

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that if we keep after our lists not less often than once a month, that the trade increase that we get would be beyond anything that we can think of in advance. We are so spasmodic about it now. We send out circulars four or five months apart, but if we made direct appeals regularly to those people who are known buyers, I believe we'd encourage them to buy more books.

MR. SHOEMAKER: I was going to ask, Mr. Chairman, if, as a publisher's representative I might not say a word on the subject. I have read Mr. Thompson's articles when they appeared, with a great deal of interest, and I have had some contact with Mr. Thompson, looking to the use of some of the lists. I know Mr. Thompson as a very efficient mail order manager. I some times wondered how Putnam's man-





*F. A. Clinch of Appleton's and Eugene Herr, of Lancaster, Pa. show the charms of the Board Walk on a sunny day to two of the visiting delegates*

aged to get the sales they do on some of their books, but after I knew Mr. Thompson, I found out how it was done. It was thru the efficiency with which he manages his department.

We all know the difficulty of effecting a proper circulation of our advertising matter, especially of our circulars and of our catalogs. Before printing costs became prohibitive, we used to buy a ton of them at a time almost, and lots of them were used for packing purposes. But since printing costs have prevented that, we haven't been quite so generous in supplying them, but still we supply a great deal. We would furnish material liberally if we were sure of its distribution, but in the great majority of cases it is not used at all effectively.

It seems to me that if practically all the dealers in the country would furnish their names to this Central Bureau, that we, as publishers, could promote and put over with

reasonable success almost any kind of book that we wished to. I hope very much, Mr. Chairman, that this plan will be carried out, and that there will be as much active interest in it as there will be in the project proposed this morning.

MR. MCLEAN: It seems to me this presupposes using the entire mailing list with each circular that is mailed out. Now, we classify our mailing list, and there are times when we don't care to use it all. Can we arrange for tabulations of a classification? We have a preferred class, second class, and then we have the entire list.

MR. THOMPSON: Oh, yes, the list could be classified. We have no objection to that.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I'd like to hear from Mr. Howe, of the *Atlantic Bookshelf*.

MR. HOWE: I am sure I can't add anything to what Mr. Thompson says. To

my limited experience it seems an excellent idea. The whole thing seems to depend on whether the big booksellers are willing to let their lists go to a central bureau, and apparently the people contributing to this symposium in the *Atlantic Bookshelf* were willing to do that.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think the majority are for it, except in a few cases where they have completed machinery for handling their lists, and most of us haven't. Our own mail order department is somewhat limited. We have the names, but I don't think we follow them up. I really think that this is an excellent suggestion. It will not only help us, but will reduce the cost of circularizing to the publishers very materially.

Would any one else like to discuss this matter?

MR. HOWE: How much of the material that comes to you do you send out now?

PRESIDENT KIDD: We use it all, but we don't use it profitably. Attractive stuff comes, and it piles up faster than we can distribute it. It goes against my nature, being of Scotch descent, to give up anything without getting some return for it. So periodically we take everything we have and bunch them into catalog envelopes and tie them up in packages of books. How much good it does, I don't know, because it is a miscellaneous lot, but we are keeping something going all the time. I have worked our names so strenuously, that sometimes I believe we are overdoing it. Last month, we couldn't help ourselves, we distributed three mailings. Returns weren't as good as if we had had one, but at the same time, I couldn't overlook these special features that were coming to us.

If we follow this method, I think it will be like "fewer and better books," and the trade might be a little more critical about the stuff that went out with their imprint, and therefore, the publishers would be a little more critical about it, too. As Mr. Thompson has suggested, there would be more attention given to the attractiveness of it, and it might pull much better than it has. For that reason, I am very much for this idea. I think the effort will not be wasted, because every name that goes in, to begin with, will cost the merchant five cents for addressographing, and

if we are going to spend money on it, then we will use the system.

MR. HERR: There is just one thought I'd like to mention in that connection, for the representatives of publishing houses or advertising houses who may hear it, and that is, that when they imprint matter for us that they have the imprinting look as if it were a part of the job, and not an afterthought. That means an awful lot to the retailer who is distributing it. I have seen some imprinted matter come in with the imprint put on sloppily, misprinted, and all looking like an after thought. From the standpoint of the bookseller who is distributing the material at his own expense, the imprint should be put on correctly by a good printer so that it looks as if it belonged to the circular. Then when the circular goes out, it is your circular.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Is there any further discussion?

MISS GORDON (of Wellesley): Is it possible to send to this Bureau your own printed matter?

PRESIDENT KIDD: Absolutely.

MISS GORDON: Of course, it goes out of the New York Post Office?

PRESIDENT KIDD: That doesn't matter at all so long as it goes to your customers with your imprint. In fact, I think it rather adds than detracts.

The Executive Secretary has asked that we find out how many booksellers would go into this. Please raise your hands so we can see how many are willing to participate.

MR. McLEAN: I want to ask a question first. I just spent \$150 on this thing, and have an addressograph. What is your suggestion, Mr. Thompson, for me to do with my equipment? I am in favor of this, of course, very much in favor of sending out mail order material, but I have the stencils. Shall I make up another \$50 worth or \$100 worth?

MR. THOMPSON: In that case, we take over your stencils.

MR. McLEAN: This includes the Theatre Guild and a lecture course I am utilizing, and I still want to utilize it.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think you could afford to pay the \$50 extra. Now, please



raise your hands, those that would expect to use this circulation clearing house.

[About one-third raised their hands.]

How many are opposed?

[Six raised their hands.]

There are far more in favor than opposed.

MISS GORDON: This morning in a report it was said that this was a delightful idea, but impractical. I believe that is what was said. I wonder why it is impractical?

PRESIDENT KIDD: I don't see why it is impractical.

MR. PECK: Perhaps Mr. Wilson can tell us why he doesn't like the idea.

MR. WILSON: I didn't say I didn't like it. I think it is all right for those that can use it, but we have a woman who attends to our mailing list department. We have our own stencils, and I don't see why we should use this new plan.

PRESIDENT KIDD: You have one of the larger shops.

MR. WILSON: Not so large, but we have already taken care of this matter.

MR. HAMLIN: I oppose it for several reasons. I think my mailing list is one of the biggest assets in my business. It's like my bank account—nobody handles my bank account but myself. I wouldn't trust my mailing list to anybody on earth.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I think you ought to move to Missouri.

MR. HAMLIN: I mail my own matter out as it comes to me.

PRESIDENT KIDD: I really believe as far as the Executive Committee is concerned, that they can come to some decision that will be agreeable to all of us.

I will ask for Mr. Frank Magel's report on the findings of the Special Committee as given to the Board of Trade. Before Mr. Magel starts in, I will say that the Committee started work at five-thirty and worked for nine hours straight on this proposition. So anything Mr. Magel has to say will be worth hearing.

MR. MAGEL: The Committee, composed of Messrs. Fuller, Korner, Stanley Rinehart, Ticknor, and Kidd ex-officio, has, since its appointment, been in conference with the officers of the Literary Guild.

The Committee has reported to the Board of Trade at a meeting of nine of the members, that the Literary Guild has submitted a proposal which in principle, but not in all its details, is under the circumstances unanimously acceptable to the Committee.

The Board of Trade, in a meeting this afternoon, has accepted unanimously in principle, but not in all its details, the proposal of the Literary Guild.

In view of this situation, the matter is now under consideration by the Board of Trade for completion, and a report will be made to the members of the American Booksellers' Association at the earliest possible moment.

The reason that this is brought to you in this particular manner is because there are several important and serious legal points which make it impossible to bring the matter to you for open discussion until they have been passed upon very carefully and thoroly by competent legal authority.

PRESIDENT KIDD: As President of your organization, and in person, I wish to thank Ben Ticknor, Stanley Rinehart, Harry Korner, and Richard Fuller for their work on this matter, which to me, is most vital to the welfare of this Association and booksellers in general, and also is a most important matter from the publisher's standpoint. I wish to reiterate that if Harold Guinzburg had never had anything to do with the Guild, but had only worked on behalf of the Viking Press, that within a year from now, with the same amount of energy, he would probably be the biggest publisher in America. Again I thank you all for your efforts, and I think that the Association will thank you when the final and definite decision comes from the Board of Trade.

MR. HERR: I move the report be received and accepted.

[Carried.]



MR. ABRAMSON: How soon will the Board of Trade report be given to the members?

PRESIDENT KIDD: As soon as the legal difficulties can be threshed out.

Now comes one of the nicer features of this Convention. We will have a report

from Ward Macauley, of the Nominating Committee. (Applause.)

MR. MACAULEY: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: Your Nominating Committee composed of R. C. Saltmarsh, E. J. Hyke, Eugene L. Herr, Charles Jackson, makes the following announcement:

## Association Officers Elected for 1928-29

*President*, ARTHUR BRENTANO, JR. of Brentano's, N. Y.

*First Vice President*, GEORGE W. JACOBS, Jacobs' Book Store, Philadelphia.

*Second Vice President*, C. G. GRAUER, Otto Ulbrich Co., Buffalo.

*Third Vice President*, MISS VERONICA HUTCHINSON, Halle Bros., Cleveland, O.

*Secretary*, ERNEST EISELE, B. Westermann Co., N. Y.

*Treasurer*, STANLEY REMINGTON, Norman Remington Co., Baltimore, Md.

### *Board of Trade:*

#### *Three Year Term:*

JOHN G. KIDD, Stewart-Kidd Co., Cincinnati, O.

SIMON L. NYE, S. Kane Sons Co., Washington.

RALPH WILSON, McDermott-Wilson Co., New York.

RICHARD FULLER, Old Corner Bookstore, Boston.

THEODORE SCHULTE, New York.

#### *One Year Term: (To fill vacancies)*

ALLEN PITMAN, Jordan, Marsh & Co., Boston.

A. KROCH, Chicago.

#### *Alternates:*

J. W. CLINGER, American Baptist Publishing Society, Philadelphia.

JOHN LOOS, Brentano's, New York.

ROGER JOHNSON, Johnson's Bookstore, Springfield, Mass.

MR. MACAULEY: We hope that this list of officers will go thru unanimously, and that you will accord them your universal support during the coming year.

PRESIDENT KIDD: What is your pleasure?

MR. HAMLIN: I move the nominations be closed.

[Carried.]

[It was voted on motion duly made and seconded, that the Secretary cast one ballot, which was done, and the above officers elected.]

PRESIDENT KIDD: I should like the new President to step up here. Before Mr. Brentano thanks me for passing over this gavel of authority which came from Independence Hall, I want to say, God bless him, and that I hope he has as faithful a crew around him as I have had during my two years, and as much appreciative co-operation.

[President Kidd handed President-Elect Brentano the Gavel.]

PRESIDENT-ELECT BRENTANO: Members of the A. B. A.: To be like Lindbergh seems to be our present ideal. All of us have our own reasons for wanting to be like him. The man and boy worships him as a fearless aviator. The flappers dream of him as their Prince Charming. Men and women admire him for his sterling character. Right now I admire him most as an orator. I think you all know how he gets up and says, "I thank you for this medal. I appreciate it very much, and I hope you will do all you can for aviation."

Just so, I want to say, "Thank you for the honor bestowed upon me. I appreciate it very much. I hope you will all do all that you can for the A.B.A. and will help me to carry on the same high ideals that we have followed these last two years in this Association under the able leadership of John G. Kidd."

PRESIDENT KIDD: I'd like to hear from our good friend, George W. Jacobs, first Vice President.

MR. JACOBS: I am reminded of a story which I heard only a few days ago which relates to one of the Honorary Fellowship members of this Association, Hon. Edward S. Stewart. You will remember he was



*President Arthur Brentano with Adam Burger of Harper's and Charles Jackson of Cleveland*

elected Governor of Pennsylvania some few years ago and shortly after he was inaugurated he was taken ill. Being a bachelor his sister acted as mistress of the Governor's Mansion, and he said to her, "I wish you would send for Dr. So-and-so."

She said, "You don't want Dr. So-and-so."

"Yes, I do."

"Why, he is a veterinarian."

"Well," he said, "He is the man I want, because I was a jackass for taking this job!"

I don't want to infer that I think I am a jackass for having accepted the nomination and election as First Vice President. I appreciate the honor very much indeed, and I will try to give the Association the very best that there is in me.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Let us hear from Mr. Grauer, our Second Vice President.

MR. GRAUER: Ordinarily a Second Vice President doesn't need to concern himself much about the Ship of State, but this really is a very great honor, I am sure, and I shall accept the office with all dignity that I can possibly muster up.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Our new Secretary, Mr. Eisele. [Not present.]

Now we will hear from the good old war horse, Stanley Remington.

MR. REMINGTON: I appreciate this honor very much, but I reserve all remarks for the future.

PRESIDENT KIDD: Before closing this business session, there is one thing I'd like to say, just one last thought I'd like to have you take with you. It seems to me that trouble or difficulties or hardships in any line, it doesn't matter much what, will bring people more closely together. I remember back in 1905 when there was just a struggling band of booksellers under the leadership, I believe, of Clarence E. Walker in the old Victoria Hotel, when the prime difficulty was, as everybody recognized, that price cutting was beyond control. We hadn't achieved the successful point we reached later. The main discussion then was freight rates. We have gone thru these various evolutions until we have come up to the present period. Possibly thru the organization and operation of the Clearing House, which has been successful, our ideas and ideals of

bookselling have been crystallized, and we feel more strongly the absolute necessity of cooperative unity. I do believe that at the present time we feel as we go home an assurance in the back of our minds that we have our fellow booksellers with us, that if there are any difficulties to be met, that we will, as a unit, meet them, and not do as we have perhaps at various stages, give the subject under discussion a careless approval. I think that when a group of men and women meet on a common ground, as we have today, there are hopes for the business. I feel, as Tom Marshall said in his book, that as long as the country is full of Fords, we are not going to the dogs. With that thought I think we will adjourn. I thank you all.

MR. HAMLIN: I want to make a announcement in this form: Ladies and Gentlemen, we invite you to the Southland of Houston, Texas, for the great Democratic Convention on June 26th, and if we cannot get the Booksellers Convention to come to Houston in 1929, we advise going to Kansas City. I thank you.

[Adjournment]

## Play Along the Boardwalk

IT is easy to entertain a convention group at Atlantic City, as a dozen steps brings one to the ever interesting Boardwalk, and, just beyond, the long stretch of beach, this year decorated by the picturesque wreck of a harbor steamer which had recently landed just in front of the hotel. Most of the delegates preferred walking to riding, and the chairmen did not make many fares out of the A. B. A. gathering.

On Tuesday the official photograph was taken on the temporary grandstand which is in front of the hotel, and the photographer then took groups of three or four as they marched away up the walk. Several of these are reproduced in the *Publishers' Weekly*.

The Entertainment Committee, of which Howard M. Jacobs was chairman, did not, however, rely on the natural attractions of

Atlantic City to make the social side of the meeting a success, and each day there were special events which strongly appealed to both men and women. Monday night opened the program with a delightful dance in the big Renaissance Ball Room, with dinner tables all around. This get-together dance has become an annual feature, as it provides so many opportunities for renewing old acquaintances and extending a welcome to new. The orchestra left nothing to be desired, and during the evening an unexpected feature was provided when Sigmund Spaeth gave an impromptu minstrel performance based on his book, "Gentlemen Be Seated." Sigmund himself at the piano discoursed on the story of old American minstrels, then elected himself as interlocutor and song leader, while a costumed minstrel man came from the wings to deliver the jokes and songs.



Tuesday saw the official outdoor games, and from four o'clock to five the buses were leaving every few minutes for the Lynnwood Golf Club. As in the other days of the convention, fair weather prevailed, but there was a chill in the air that made exercise seem desirable, and those who had not brought their golf equipment stayed in the big club room with its open fire or went out to the ball game, which provided violent exercise for players who had long since forgotten their baseball habits. In the evening there was again a turn toward the dance floor, this time using the dance hall downstairs in the Yachting Grill with the gallery around, where a card tournament went on simultaneously.

Wednesday evening brought a new type of entertainment, when the Ambassador's big swimming pool was opened up and the Ambassador bathing beauties, amateur performers par excellence, gave a remarkable exhibit of diving, swimming and water sports. Many of the booksellers afterwards indulged in pool exercise, and the audience was treated to some impromptu water acrobatics by the well-known quartette, Christopher Morley, Noble Cathcart, Guy Holt and Ellis Meyers.

The annual banquet, which always falls on Thursday night, was slightly handicapped when the Ambassador Hotel gave over the best banquet room to a convention of Tall Cedars. This led to a difficulty in acoustics, tho there were no shortcomings in the meal itself. On this occasion the Association presented President Kidd with a beautiful Gruen watch as an expression of its appreciation and affection. The presentation speech was handsomely made by Eugene L. Herr of Lancaster, president of the Association the last time it met in Atlantic City. He said, in part, "I want to welcome to the ranks of the past presidents of the A. B. A., John Kidd, the presiding officer, and to present this watch to him on behalf of the Association, whose love and esteem he has earned by his faithful work in our interest during the past two years and by the manner in which he has carried on the traditions of the American booktrade in building up the work of the organization."

At the same time, a handsome gold fountain pen was presented to Howard Jacobs in recognition of the arduous and

successful service he had given as chairman of the Entertainment Committee.

The first guest of honor was Meredith Nicholson, the famous Hoosier whose long list of successes has made him known to bookshops in every part of the country. "One of the significant and encouraging things in the recent literary development of America" he said, "is the great number of books on government, on political history and biography. This has come at a very fortunate time in the history of America. We have too much indifference to politics. The biographies we have had of great Americans and the critical work in the field of political and social conditions have all met a great need. I believe that a book like Senator Beveridge's 'Life of John Marshall' is a book calculated to plant in the mind of every American a greater idea of what America means. I hope you booksellers will encourage reading in this field of political and social interest. I see by the figures my friend Melcher got into the papers yesterday that 200,000,000 books were sold last year. Even at that, a whole lot of people in my country still have great faith in Ayer's Almanac. Some of them believe all the medical information obtained from that kind of reading. I feel under obligations to all booksellers, and have thru many years. Your Association is twenty-eight years old, and it was just twenty years ago that I put out my first serious book, and, as I have averaged about one a year since then, my literary birthday about coincides with yours."

Lowell Thomas, author and adventurer, whose lectures have followed his books in making his reputation thruout the country, then spoke. "Captain Kidd, Ladies and Gentlemen," began Mr. Thomas. "This is not the first time I have talked under difficult circumstances. In Ceylon I spoke in a hall whose roof opened up at night and not only admitted the light of the stars but a troupe of monkeys. Again, in the Malay States I was speaking in the open, and the powerful light attracted the great vampire bats out of the forest, and they dove repeatedly at the screen at my side. Sitting next to me tonight is one of the best known aviators in America, a professional flyer, while I am what the aviators call a professional "sandbag." One time I was flying in the Near East with a young

fellow from the States, one of the fellows who couldn't wait for the United States to be in the war and flew with the British. I noticed his accent wasn't Oxford and asked him where he came from. 'I am the son of a grocer in Berkeley,' he said. While hunting raiders in the Indian Ocean he got stranded on a coral island, and I can think of nothing more strange than a young Californian, Captain of the Naval Air Forces, shipwrecked on a coral island and singing jazz songs to the savages. During the course of my speaking tours of this country the high spots of my tour have been the hours I have spent in the bookshops that many of you own. I consider it a high honor to have the privilege of being present at this annual banquet."

A telegram was read from Colonel Clarence Chamberlin, regretting that rains in the middle west had delayed his return until too late to attend. Mr. Kidd, however, had another flyer to his string and introduced Captain Elliott White Springs, author of many stories on aviation and of a book soon to be published. "I had chosen as my subject tonight the title of a book that I want to write, 'What Every Young Girl Should Know About Aviators.' However, my publisher, Stanley Rinehart says this title would not do at all, so I must say something about war flying. Military aviation began, of course, with the war in 1914. Up to that time aeroplanes were only used for experimental purposes. When the planes were successful in bringing in information, the opposing side immediately started to find ways to stop this espionage. First, they just took up a rifleman who fired at the other plane. Then they fastened machine guns to the planes themselves and sent these out to fight the enemy planes. But the sky was big, and it was difficult to stop observation. Then they built special fighting planes whose sole function was to shoot down other planes, and small single seaters which could hide in the clouds and wait for the enemy. Then single seaters were developed to fight the single seaters. Motors improved, speed got higher, the fighting spirit rose. Shooting from the air is rather different from shooting from the ground. You have the tremendous speed to deal with. I had a site in the middle of the gun so arranged that both guns

would converge at two hundred yards. Then with two machine guns going nine hundred rounds a minute you could hardly miss an adversary in front of you. With all the firing and fighting you would think it would have killed off the whole flying corps in a short time, but it didn't, it being so difficult to hit the vital parts. There has been a big argument in Washington between the Army and Navy Forces as to what to do with our air service. They more or less decided that the Air Service should be connected with the Infantry, but I believe the next ten years will see a change and that the Infantry can be used in connection with the Air Forces."

Morris Fishbein, well-known writer, and author of "The Medical Follies," brought a new range of interest into A. B. A. banquet speeches. "Mr. Nicholson has referred to the famous Almanacs of Ayers and Hostetter, those almanacs filled with marvelous testimonials that make up such a large part of the patent medicine trade. Now, you have the same sort of thing in the booktrade, but you call them 'blurbs.' They put them on the outside of books instead of putting them in almanacs. The great difficulty arising in medicine today is the control of the charlatan who convinces people that they need some sort of remedy to make themselves have a better appearance before the public. There was a time when the book on 'Feeding the Baby' was the best seller in the bookstores, but nowadays it is 'The Care of the Skin and Hair' that goes just as fast. One Professor Schoulters advertised and urged people to pluck out a few hairs and send them in for examination. We plucked two from a fur coat, and the answer came back, 'I have examined the hair under a microscope, and you are suffering from malnutrition of the hair roots.' One of the hopes of the future is to get wider dissemination of books in the health field, books of real value. If we can have more best sellers in that field, there will be a reasonable amount of hope. As long as the public persists in getting its medical information from that extremely salacious document which I have characterized as 'The Moron's Bible,' Mr. MacFadden's *Physical Culture*, there is very little to expect in the way of health education."



# English Booktrade News

From Our London Correspondent

**T**HERE has just been issued what is called an Interim Report of the Joint Committee, appointed by the Publishers' Association and Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland, to consider and report upon the possibilities of greater co-operation between the two associations for the purpose of improving the organization of the booktrade. Immediately the Joint Committee came into being, sub-committees were formed with the object of making a critical survey of the British booktrade. Three such committees were formed. [This report will be printed in full in the *Publishers' Weekly*.—Ed.]

## Major Putnam

Major G. H. Putnam is here, and seems as mentally vigorous—physically active as ever. He has already met many of his old publishing friends, and spoken at many places. No other American publisher is more warmly welcomed in London than the veteran major.

## Advertising of Books

There seems to be a tendency on the part of English publishers to question the value of spending large sums of money in advertising books in the general press. There is no question about it ever stopping, but there is an inclination to look somewhat deeper into the matter and to try to discover if it is really worth while. Everyone concerned feels a doubt as to whether the returns really justify the large expenditure. Unfortunately, it is very rarely that you can key the results from the advertising of a book in a daily newspaper, or for the matter of that, in any paper. Many feel that more advertising should be done in booktrade papers. As was said the other day in the Joint Committee Report, the cost of publicity is greater in proportion to the business done than formally, and shows a tendency to increase, and there is no means of checking the results of press advertising.

## Trade Conditions

The spring trade is continuing good. Quite a number of books have been active

and publishers and booksellers are very hopeful about the future. Not a great number of distinctive books have appeared, but there have been many which have had satisfactory sales. Probably the novels of the season, so far, have been Lady Oxford's "Octavia," and Thornton Wilder's "The Cabala." Another successful and brilliant piece of fiction is titled "Jazz and Jasper." The chances are that the really big general book will be Lord Beaverbrook's "Politicians and the War" which has been creating something of a sensation in the London *Evening Standard*.

## Two American Novels

Brentano's London House is emphasizing the new Anita Loos novel, "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes." The advertisements which Harold Shaylor, who is now head of Brentano's London office, is putting out are admirable, and are to be found in many places. The other big American book is Miss Ferber's "Show Boat." There is likely to be a big demand for the 2/- popular edition which Heinemann's have in preparation, in view of the fact that the musical version of Edna Ferber's story is being produced at the famous Drury Lane Theatre this month, and large advertising appropriations are being reserved in the big dailies.

## Some Good Sellers

Stephens' "Etched in Moonlight."  
Rosita Forbes' "Adventure."  
Kaye-Smith's "Iron and Smoke."  
Bennett's "Strange Vanguard."  
Fox's "The Mastery of the Pacific."  
Stern's "Debonair."

Many new popular editions are active, and a busy time is expected as the summer months approach. Probably the market is fuller of cheap reprints than ever before.

## Booksellers' Conference

A big program has been arranged for the Annual Conference for the Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland at the end of May. This year the Conference is to take place in Edinburgh, and covers receptions, sight-seeing, meetings and conferences. The Lord Provost of Edin-



burgh receives the booksellers, and the President of the Booksellers' Association, Charles Young, is to be Chairman at the Annual Dinner at which the toast of "Literature" will be proposed by Professor H. J. C. Grierson and replied to by Dr. R. W. Mackenna.

#### A Publisher M. P.

Colonel John Buchan M. P., is an extraordinarily busy man. He has made his mark in the House of Commons, and he still manages to be very closely associated with the direction of the famous publishing house of Thomas Nelson and Sons. And in addition, one may not forget that he is frequently making public speeches, looking after his constituency and writing very successful novels. His new one is to be called "The Runagate Club." Colonel Buchan is also actively interested in the welfare of the assistants of publishers and booksellers, and is Chairman of the National Book Trade Provident Society. Colonel Buchan represents the Scottish Universities in the House of Commons.

#### A Publishers' Debate

Sir Ernest Benn, the publisher, is debating with a well-known Labor member of Parliament on the subject of Capitalism *versus* Socialism. The debate is actually taking place on paper, and Sir Ernest Benn's firm will eventually publish it. The book will really consist of a half-a-dozen letters.

#### Foyles'

Stephen Graham, who knows more about foreign places than most people, delivered an extremely interesting talk at Foyles the other evening on "What English Books do Foreigners Read?" Incidentally, Mr. Graham's last book "New York Nights" has met with considerable success over here.

#### A Washington Letter

B. F. Stevens paid £58 for a very fine autograph letter signed from George Washington, dated Dec. 22, 1796, and addressed to Rufus King Esq. The letter belonged to Cromwell O. Varley, and was auctioned at Sotheby's. A portion of the letter was printed in their catalog of the sale.

"... Permit me to take the further liberty of entrusting the letters herewith sent, to your care—that to Count Rumford, is in answer to one without date or place, accompanying the first volume of his

Essays, Political, Economical and Philosophical—this mark of his politeness requires an acknowledgement on my part—but in truth I know not where to direct to him—His Essays are dedicated to the Elector Palatine, reigning Duke of Bavaria, and dated in London, in July last—hence I conclude he is now there . . ."

#### Stanley Paul with Hutchinson

Stanley Paul & Company, of 8 Endsley Gardens, publishers for twenty years, are now one of the Hutchinson & Company group. Mr. Paul still has an active part in the business, however. In addition he has been appointed General Sales and Publicity Manager of Hutchinson's and its subsidiary firms.

#### James Tait Black Prize to Francis Brett Young

THE James Tait Black Memorial Prize for 1927 has been awarded to Francis Brett Young for his "Love is Enough." This prize of £250, was instituted by the late Mrs. Janet Coats Black in memory of her husband, a partner in the publishing firm of A. & C. Black, and the award is made on the judgment of one man, the Professor of English Literature in the University of Edinburgh, or failing him, the Professor of English in the University of Glasgow. "Love is Enough" was published in two volumes by Knopf in this country. The same publishers have just issued a new novel by Mr. Young titled "The Key of Life."

#### British Colonies Postal Fees Changed

THE Second Assistant Postmaster General, W. Irving Glover, has announced that on May 1, 1928, the following transit charges will apply to parcel post packages weighing more than 11 pounds, but not exceeding the maximum weight limit prescribed for each country:

Aden, \$1.98; British Somaliland, \$1.80; Ceylon, \$1.86; Cyprus, \$1.98; India (British), \$1.98; Iraq, \$2.76; Kenya and Uganda, \$2.46; Malta, \$1.38; Palestine, \$1.86; Seychelles, \$2.34; Tanganyika Territory: Lake Victoria area, \$3.24; Dar-es-Salaam and other places, \$2.46; Zanzibar, \$2.28.

# Chicago Book News

Milton Fairman

of the Chicago Evening Post

ONLY one Chicago bookseller has, as far as I know, paid much attention to the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the death of Albrecht Dürer. Nuremberg is *en fête* for the event, and all Germany is greatly interested in the celebration, but in Chicago Silbermann's shop at 117 East Chicago Avenue, seems to be the only one with a special Dürer exhibit. Mr. Silbermann is showing some excellent reproductions of the great German's work.



TARG'S bookstore at 808 North Clark Street is offering a prize of \$10 for the best sonnet received on the spiritual value of good literature. The contest has attracted considerable interest in the adjoining literary colony (Targ's is close to Newberry Square) and a goodly number of sonnets has been received. Mr. Targ will have the winning poem printed in leaflet form and copies will be distributed as an advertisement.



FANNY BUTCHER recently announced a new feature for the Saturday book page of the *Chicago Tribune*. The advertising department is running a column of books wanted and books for sale, and altho only a few issues have appeared since the feature was inaugurated, it seems to be meeting with a promising reception from *Tribune* readers. This is the first time a Chicago paper has offered such a service to its readers.



THERE'S a new bride in Chicago bookdom. Rose Oller, who has proved a very capable assistant to Mrs. Marcella Burns-Hahner in the Marshall Field book section, is now Mrs. Charles Berton Harbaugh. Mr. Harbaugh is not unknown in local book circles as he has been connected for some time with the Art Institute library.

THE wedding may have prompted Miss Oller, or Mrs. Harbaugh, to set up a display of beautiful bindings and rare editions for wedding gifts to the bride who can read and write. At any rate, the man, who every June faces the difficult problem of selecting gifts, will find expert assistance at Field's. Another department is mindful of the many confirmations in the spring and has a display of religious books. Still a third exhibit is one of books suitable for graduations.



CREDIT must be given to Field's for at least one thing: they have a calendar—and use it. Mrs. Hahner has noted the approach of the travel season and within a few days a brand new exhibit of travel books will blossom out. Spring house-cleaning and early gardens brought an exhibit of original designs used in *House Beautiful*. Not only was there an increase in the sales of books on the home and garden, but the art department discovered that the students who viewed the exhibit (it was a competition for a prize offered by the magazine) became interested in that section, and some few became customers.



CHARLES MAYER and Thomas Darling Folan have joined the staff of the book department of Benziger Brothers, 205 West Washington Street, as assistants to Louis J. Rothbauer.



BEN ABRAMSON of the Argus Book Shop, 434 South Wabash Avenue, has announced the publication of "What Never Dies," by Barbey D'Aurevilly in a translation credited to Oscar Wilde. It will be a limited edition at \$10.



THE nationwide \$1,000 contest for a title for Edgar Guest's forthcoming book of verse ended at midnight, May 15th. Michael Strauss, who has been contest edi-



tor for the *Post*, estimates that no less than 3,000 letters were received from Chicago alone. Other papers syndicating Mr. Guest's verse report a similar response. Judges who will examine the contributions are Llewellyn Jones, editor of the *Post's* literary review, George Matthew Adams, head of the syndicate bearing his name, and F. K. Reilly of Reilly and Lee, publishers of the book. An announcement of the winner is expected early in June.



THE Walden Bookshop, 410 North Michigan Avenue, has published an unusually attractive catalog of the work of private presses for its customers. Georgia Lingafelt, of the store's staff, compiled the list. A limited edition on handmade paper was printed for the Walden by the St. Dominic's Press, Sussex, England. All composition was by hand.



AN apology is really due A. Kroch for an error in the last column of Chicago book notes. Due to a compositor's error, Mr. Kroch's beautiful store on Michigan Avenue was referred to as a "news stand." My copy spoke of his brisk business at the "new stand." Mr. Kroch also objected to having his store mentioned in connection with another instead of being given a separate item. Sorry the error occurred.



ANYWAY, Mr. Kroch had a very attractive display for the reception to Baron von Huenefeld and his companions on the trans-Atlantic flight. It was arranged by his two star window dressers, J. F. Meegan, an Irishman, and G. H. Goldscheider, a German.

### Shaw Calls on Menjou

BERNARD SHAW has called on Adolphe Menjou in London, and newspapers have reported hopefully, that Shaw discussed a production of "Arms and the Man" with Menjou. It is reported that Shaw once refused \$1,000,000 for the screen rights to all his plays, and Mr. Shaw himself tells how he checkmated lecture agencies which offered him American lectures at \$2,500 apiece by lecturing for talking films.

### New Version of Bierce's Death

THE cause of Ambrose Bierce's disappearance in Mexico in 1914 has been discussed and speculated on for fourteen years, and now a new version has been presented by Edward S. O'Reilly, an officer on the staff of the rebel leader Pancho Villa in 1914. Mr. O'Reilly is sure the body of Bierce is buried in a grave just outside the consecrated ground of the cemetery at Sierra Mojada, one of the Mexican mining towns.

Discussing his investigation of the case Mr. O'Reilly said: "I never met Ambrose Bierce, and I did not see him die, but after investigating the story of the American who was killed at Sierra Mojada . . . I was so firmly convinced that this man was Bierce that I placed a marker at the grave, and burned his name into the piece of board.

"Early in 1914 I went into the town with General Torivio Ortege to find out, if I could, the identity of the American who had been killed there. I learned that he was an old man, with white hair and mustache, who had drifted into the place. He could not speak much Spanish and was in and out of the saloons, morose and solitary, and apparently trying to get in touch with Villa's men, who had just left. He made maps, so some of the Mexicans decided he was a spy.

"Several Mexicans met him in a bar-room. One borrowed his pistol. Then they went out for a walk, and in the outskirts of the town they shot him and buried him there.

"An eyewitness told me that the old man was first shot in the legs. He sank down in a sitting position and then he threw back his head and laughed at his assailants. As he laughed at them, so I was told, they riddled his body with seven or eight shots.

"Now that I am certain it was Bierce, his death recalls one of his own grim tales of death called 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,' in which a prisoner dreams of escape in the few seconds preceding his execution by hanging.

"At the home of an old man where the American had lodged I was shown two empty envelopes, which had contained letters to Bierce. His name was written in ink and one of the envelopes had an Oakland (Cal.) address on the back."



## April Best Sellers

THREE times, now, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" has hit the bell at the top of the *Books of the Month* Best Seller list; and this report includes a period before the Pulitzer Prizes were announced. A new detective story record has been made by "The Greene Murder Case," by S. S. Van Dine, which jumped into third place in its first month of publication. This is the highest place reached by a mystery story in many years, due to the reputation of the author's previous books. There are four more new titles on the fiction list for April, equally dividing the list between older and new books. Zane Grey's latest western story, "Nevada," took fourth place. Another sure-fire best seller is sixth, "Beauty and the Beast" by Kathleen Norris. It is about an American yachting party in romantic Sicily; a new scene for Mrs. Norris, whose stories are usually laid in California. "Debonair" by G. B. Stern is next. The first months' sales of this book have probably greatly exceeded any of Miss Stern's previous novels, which have never attained such a high place. "Debonair" is the nickname of a young English girl, who breaks away from maternal apron-strings to taste life in various parts of Europe. A first novel takes ninth place, "Bad Girl" by Viña Delmar. This story, which is being talked about quite a bit, having been selected by the Literary Guild and banned by Boston, tells of the meeting, love and marriage of two ordinary Manhattanites of somewhere north of 125th St. Other new novels that nearly made the best seller class last month were "The Hotel" by Elizabeth Bowen, "Ashenden" by W. Somerset Maugham, "Crimson Roses" by Grace Livingston Hill, "Daisy and Daphne" by Rose Macaulay, "The Island Within" by Ludwig Lewisohn, and "The Man Who Knew Coolidge" by Sinclair Lewis.

"Trader Horn," which slipped from first place for several months, regained its leadership of the non-fiction list in April. There is only one new title on this list, "Skyward" by Commander Richard E. Byrd. This is the air hero's story of his flights over the North Pole and across the Atlantic, and his plans for the South Pole flight

this summer. "Safari" has gone up to eighth place from tenth in the previous month. Other promising new non-fiction titles were "Lawrence and the Arabian Adventure" by Robert Graves, "Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing" by Samuel Hoffenstein, and "American Prosperity" by Paul Mazur.

There are some books, chiefly biography and history, which would be best sellers, if separate lists were made up for separate sections of the country. For instance, "Andrew Jackson" and "Andrew Johnson" are very popular in the South, as are "Sam Houston" in Texas and "Kit Carson" in the Middle West. "The Buccaneers of the Pacific" is a good seller in the west.

### FICTION

- Wilder. "The Bridge of San Luis Rey." A. & C. Boni. \$2.50  
 Walpole. "Wintersmoon." Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50  
 Van Dine. "The Greene Murder Case." Scribner. \$2.00  
 Grey. "Nevada." Harper. \$2.00  
 Cannon. "Red Rust." Little, Brown. \$2.50  
 Norris. "Beauty and the Beast." Doubleday, Doran. \$2.00  
 Stern. "Debonair." Knopf. \$2.50  
 Byrne. "Crusade." Little, Brown. \$2.00  
 Delmar. "Bad Girl." Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50  
 Tarkington. "Claire Ambler." Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50

### NON-FICTION

- Horn & Lewis. "Trader Horn." Simon & Schuster. \$4.00  
 Maurois. "Disraeli." Appleton. \$3.00  
 Mayo. "Mother India." Harcourt, Brace. \$3.75  
 Ludwig. "Napoleon." Boni & Liveright. \$3.00  
 Byrd. "Skyward." Putnam. \$3.50  
 Lindbergh. "We." Putnam. \$2.50  
 O'Neill. "Strange Interlude." Boni & Liveright. \$2.50  
 Johnson. "Safari." Putnam. \$5.00  
 Thomas. "Count Luckner the Sea Devil." Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50  
 Duncan. "My Life." Boni & Liveright. \$5.00

## In the Bookmarket

CHATTER anywhere, everywhere, turns these days to Thornton Wilder. "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" saw to that, and *A. & C. Boni's* promotion of Wilder's first book, "The Cabala," is doing a lot to help it. But the newest Wilder topic is his recent acceptance of an offer from *Harper & Brothers* to publish his books from now on. Wilder sails early in July for England where he will complete work on his new novel, "The Woman of Andros" after Terence's play of the same name. After two months in England he will make his way down to the Aegean, where he will stay until January when he will return to New York. A book of short plays by Mr. Wilder will be published next season by *Coward and McCann* but formal announcement of the volume is withheld until that firm publishes its complete list, probably in July. ❀ ❀ ❀ It is further reported that *Harper* has signed up Count Keyserling. *Harcourt, Brace*, who have been his publishers in this country so far, have just published a new volume by him, "Europe," which they announce as "a spiritual Baedeker of Europe." ❀ ❀ ❀

In one of New York's best bookstores a customer approached a clerk and the following conversation was overheard:

Customer: "What's this book everybody's talking about—'The Bridge of San Luis Rey?'"

Clerk: "Why, it's a mystery story. Five people were crossing a perfectly good bridge, and without any reason at all the bridge suddenly breaks. The mystery was, who did it? And the book is all to unravel the mystery of what made the bridge break. Finally, the Priest in the story—"

Customer: "Did the Priest have anything to do with it?"

Clerk: "No, but he finds a clue."

Customer: "Well, who did it?"

Clerk: "That's the story. You'll have to read the book to find out." ❀ ❀ ❀

*Putnam's* have announced that, in addition to the regular trade edition of "The Three Musketeers of the Air," the account by the Bremen fliers of their trans-Atlantic flight, there will be a limited autographed edition of 250 copies of the English text and

250 copies of the German. In each case the book will sell for \$25. *Von Huenefeld*, *Koehl* and *FitzMaurice* will autograph each copy. The publishers believe it to be the first time that a book in German which has been set in this country has been issued in a limited autographed edition. ❀ ❀ ❀

*E. Pettit*, who, it is generally known, is *Mrs. Arthur Somers Roche*, has completed work on the dramatization of her novel, "Move Over" which was published last fall by *Sears*. *Edgar Selwyn* will make it his first production of the new season. ❀ ❀ ❀ *Jim Tully's* novel "Jarnegan," *A. and C. Boni*, will, according to the plans of *James W. Elliot*, soon be produced on Broadway. This will be the second Tully book to be dramatized. A few years ago a dramatization, "Outside Looking In" by *Maxwell Anderson* of Tully's hobo autobiography, "Beggars of Life" was produced. ❀ ❀ ❀ The *Schuberts* have announced their intention of making a musical comedy of "Alice In Wonderland." The book and lyrics have been written by *Harry B. Smith*, who is an avid collector of *Lewis Carroll's* manuscripts, letters and first editions. *Alice Gerstenberg* did a dramatization of Carroll's classic which was produced in New York and published in book form by *McClurg*, but the musical version will be a new departure. ❀ ❀ ❀

*Harcourt, Brace and Company* has taken over from *Henry Holt and Company* "Everybody's Cook Book," by *Isabel Ely Lord*. The new price is \$3.75. ❀ ❀ ❀

*Payson & Clarke* announce that the publication of "Murder!" by *Dorothy L. Sayers* has been postponed to the spring of 1929. Another book by Miss Sayers, "The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club," will be published in the fall of 1928 in place of "Murder!" ❀ ❀ ❀ Another postponement is that of *Lewis Browne's* "The Graphic Bible," which was announced for publication in April and has been put off till the fall. ❀ ❀ ❀

*Little, Brown & Co.* have obtained the American rights to the "Memories and Reflections" of the late *Earl of Oxford and Asquith*, completed just before his death. It will be published September 1.



## Rural Life Books

COOPERATION to increase interest in rural life books will be one feature of the National Country Life Conference to be held at Urbana and Champaign, Illinois this summer. The Urbana University Bookstore will have a display demonstration appealing to country buyers of books. There will also be a book wagon, supplied by the Illinois Library Association, and several speakers for the various groups of the Conference. The dates are June 19, 20, 21.

## Jacket Awards Announced

THE winners of the book jacket competition conducted by the *Atlantic Bookshelf* have been announced this week. The three prizes of \$25 were to go to the best jackets for juvenile, fiction and non-fiction books. The juvenile winner was "Skipping Village," written and designed by Lois Lenski and published by *Stokes*; the non-fiction winner was "The American Adventure" written by David Saville Muzzey, and designed by R. P. Wilkins, and published by *Harper*; the fiction prize was won by "The Torches Flare," written by Stark Young, designed by Cleon and published by *Scribner*.

## What Princetonians Prefer

THE class of 1928 of Princeton University has voted its favorites in the arts, and booksellers in the vicinity of the New Jersey town will know what authors to stock. "Tom Jones" received 60 votes as against "Tale of Two Cities" and "Sorrell and Son" which each got 11. Kipling's "If" was voted the favorite poem by 23, "Don Juan" by 19 and "Eve of St. Agnes" by 10. 69 selected "Cyrano de Bergerac" as their favorite play while 16 preferred "Hamlet" and 10 "The Road to Rome." Other favorites were—fiction writers: Sabatini, Tarkington, Farnol and Kipling; poets: Kipling, Keats and Byron; dramatist: Shakespeare, O'Neill and Shaw. Edgar Guest, Wordsworth and Robert Service, respectively, were voted "worst poets." The Princetonian's favorite magazines are the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Cosmopolitan* and the *New Yorker* and his newspapers the *New York Times*, the *New*

*York Herald Tribune*, and the *New York World*, in the order named. It is interesting to note that John Held, Jr. received only 4 votes less than Rembrandt as the favorite artist with Maxfield Parrish running a close third.

## Books for Rotary Boys

THE boys' club work of the Rotary Clubs has always made a particular appeal to its membership, and the clubs have not failed to remember the boys' reading interest. A few years ago John Martin prepared a special list for the New York Rotary Club which was printed and widely distributed, and now the Baltimore Library, thru the active interest of Joseph L. Wheeler, the librarian, has worked with the Rotary Club in Baltimore to print a very attractive list entitled "Books That Boys Like," a 16-page single column list with 3 or 4-line annotations, names of publishers and prices.

## Boy Scouts to Africa

THE three Boy Scouts who will accompany Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson on a big game expedition in equatorial Africa have been selected. They are Robert Douglas, Jr., of Greensboro, N. C., Douglas Oliver of Atlanta, Ga., and David Martin, Jr., of Austin, Minn. They will join the expedition as the guests of David Binney Putnam, author of "David Goes To Baffin Land" and other books, and his father, George Palmer Putnam, and of David T. Layman, an official of the French line. Mr. Putnam and David first invited two boys to go, and Mr. Layman later announced that he would provide funds for a third. The boys will write an account of their trip which will be published by Putnam's in their series of boys' books for boys.

## Governor Smith, Author

WITH the publication of "Progressive Democracy" this week by Harcourt, Brace & Company, Governor Al Smith of New York becomes a full-fledged author. "Progressive Democracy" is a collection of his most representative speeches and public papers. Henry Moskowitz, a lifelong friend of Smith's, has edited the book.



## Obituary Notes

## SIR EDMUND GOSSE

SIR EDMUND GOSSE, Librarian of the House of Commons and internationally-celebrated English author, died in London on May 15. Gosse was born in London in 1849 and from 1867 to the close of his life was engaged actively in literary pursuits, first as assistant in the British Museum, then as translator with the Board of Trade, until in 1904 he became librarian for the House of Lords. Gosse is well known not only as a poet and essayist but as a translator of foreign languages. He was always interested in introducing foreign languages to his countrymen. In 1891 he translated Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler" and in 1893 his "Master Builder." The latter translation was made in collaboration with William Archer. He first published several volumes of poems which were issued in a collected edition in 1911. His prose volumes included "Seventeenth Century Studies," 1883; "History of Eighteenth Century Literature," 1889; "Critical Kit-Kats," 1896; "History of Modern English Literature," 1897; "Life of Sir Thomas Browne," 1905; "Father and Son," 1907 (Crowned by the French Academy, 1913); "Hendrik Ibsen," 1908; "Collected Essays," (5 volumes) 1913; "Life of Algernon Charles Swinburne," 1917; "Books on the Table," 1921; "More Books on the Table," 1923; "Leaves and Fruit," 1927.

## STANDISH O'GRADY

STANDISH O'GRADY, who because of his works on Irish history and Irish historical romance is generally considered as the originator of the "Celtic Renaissance" in the literary world, died this week at Shanklin, Isle of Wight. He was eighty-two years old, having been born in 1846. He was educated at Tipperary Grammar School and Trinity College, Dublin. He relinquished the Bar for journalism and then turned to literature. His work includes "History of Ireland, Heroic Period," "History of Ireland, Critical and Philosophical" and numerous other volumes. In 1918 O'Grady's "Selected Essays and Passages," with an introduction by Ernest Boyd, was published.

## ALAN DALE

ALAN DALE, author and dramatic critic, died suddenly on Tuesday while traveling in England. He had gone abroad to review the drama situation in England and on the Continent and to revisit his birthplace at Birmingham, England. Mr. Dale was born Alfred J. Cohen. He came to this country forty-three years ago and has served as dramatic critic on several papers. Most recently he has been writing for the New York *American* and the Cosmopolitan News Service. He wrote many volumes of fiction and collections of sketches, as well as a play. His books include "Jonathan's Home," "A Marriage Below Zero," "Familiar Chats With Queens of the Stage," "Wanted—A Cook," "The Great Wet Way," "When a Man Commutes." His play was called "The Madonna of the Future." Mr. Dale was born in 1861.

## THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY

THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY, author and teacher, died in Boston last week, at the age of 82. He was born in Newport, R. I., in 1845, and graduated from Harvard in 1866, was a grandson of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry and a descendant of Benjamin Franklin. At one time he was an instructor in English at Harvard. Later he was Professor in Kuogijuku College, Tokio. He was editor of *The North American Review* for a time. Among his books were "Life and Letters of Francis Lieber," "English Literature in the Eighteenth Century," "The Evolution of the Snob," "From Opitz to Lessing" and, in collaboration with William Dean Howells, "The Library of Adventure." His widow, Lilla Cabot Perry, is a painter and author.

## Correction

THE statement in the *Publishers' Weekly* of May 5th that the schools of Manchester, New Hampshire, had decided to bar history books and primers that taught evolution was based on a news item in the Boston *Post* dated Manchester, N. H., April 19th. The Superintendent of Schools, Louis P. Benezet, writes the *Publishers' Weekly* that no such action has ever been taken or considered and that some other Manchester must have been meant.

## Communication

2 Park Street,  
Boston, Mass.,

Editor, *Publishers' Weekly*:

The excellent article by Myron Williams in the last *Publishers' Weekly* recommends, among other volumes, "Daniel Boone" by Stanley Vestal.

I suppose he intended to say "Kit Carson" which we have just published, as I know of no life of Boone by this author.

We have had a number of inquiries about this and I wish you would, if possible, correct the error in your next issue.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY,  
R. N. Linscott.

[Two excellent books on frontier heroes have here probably been confused. Stanley Vestal's volume was, as Mr. Linscott points out, "Kit Carson." "Daniel Boone" by Stewart Edward White was issued by Doubleday, Page in a new and beautiful edition with illustrations by James Daugherty last year.—ED.]

## Change in Price

ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC.

"Columbus," by Marius André, has been reduced from \$5.00 to \$4.00.

"In American" by John V. A. Weaver has been advanced from \$1.50 to \$2.00.

HARPER & BROS.

The notice of increase in price of Watson's "Ways of Behaviorism" in the April 28th issue was incorrect. It should have stated that Dr. Watson's book has been reduced from \$3.50 to \$2.50.

## Business Notes

BERKELEY, CALIF.—The Sather Gate Book Shop, 2271 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, Calif., has been incorporated. There will be no change in the policy of the business and only one in the personnel, Sidney L. Lee who is with the firm will hold the office of vice president. The corporation has the following officers: Eugene Sommer, president; Sidney L. Lee, vice president, and Catherine J. Herbert, secretary and treasurer.

ELIZABETH, N. J.—The bookstore of Noah F. Morrison, The Sign of the Ark, recently suffered from a fire. The temporary address is 62 De Hart Place, Elizabeth, N. J.

FRESNO, CALIF.—The Fresno Book Shop, under the proprietorship of Robert Edgerton, will move from its present address at 1942 Tuolumne Street on June 1st into larger quarters at 1359 Fulton Street

NEW YORK CITY—The Park Central Book and Stationery Shop has been opened at 870 Seventh Avenue. It will have a general stock as well as books in fine bindings and a rental library.

NEW YORK CITY—Henrietta Mark has just opened a Bookshop and Rental Library at 425 Madison Ave. Miss Mark was with Womrath's for many years.

TULSA, OKLA.—F. M. Hough has bought, from J. H. Miller, Miller's Old Book Shop at 19 West 3rd Street which he will conduct under the established name.

WEST NORWOOD, N. J.—Milton Gray has opened a bookshop in West Norwood where he will have a general stock in addition to rare editions.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.—Parker's Book Shop, Gilbert M. Parker, opened in the Spring of 1927, is starting on its second year. It is located on Martine Avenue at Grand Street.

## Personal Notes

THEODORE FREDENBURGH, formerly of Houghton Mifflin, has recently joined the sales staff of Harcourt, Brace and Company, and will travel on the Pacific Coast for them.

GEORGE LIVERMORE, circulation manager, and Ethel Kelley, advertising manager, of the *Bookman* have resigned.

## Macmillan Changes

C. H. SEAVER, head of the educational department of Macmillan, has now left the organization, and A. H. Nelson, while continuing as vice-president, takes on the direction of that department. George P. Brett, Jr., becomes general manager as well as treasurer, and Mr. Garton, who came to the eastern sales department a year ago from the San Francisco office, takes up the work of Mr. Brett, Jr., in charge of the sales department.



# The Weekly Record of New Publications

**T**HIS list aims to be a complete and accurate record of American book publications. Pamphlets will be included only if of special value. Publishers should send copies of all books promptly for annotation and entry, and the receipt of advance copies insures record simultaneous with publication. The annotations are descriptive, not critical; intended to place, not to judge the books. Pamphlet material and books of lesser trade interest are listed in smaller type.

*The entry is transcribed from title page when the book is sent for record. Prices are added except when not supplied by publisher or obtainable only on specific request, in which case word "apply" is used. When not specified the binding is "cloth."*

*Imprint date or best available date, preferably copyright date in bracket, is always stated, except when imprint date and copyright date agree and are of the current year, in which case only "c" is used. No ascertainable date is designated thus: [n.d.].*

*Sizes are indicated as follows: F (folio: over 30 centimeters high); Q (4to: under 30 cm.); O (8vo: 25 cm.); D (12mo: 20 cm.); S (16mo: 17½ cm.); T (24mo: 15 cm.); sq., obl., nar., designate square, oblong, narrow.*

## A. L. A. Committee on Bookbinding

Care and binding of books and magazines. 60p. D '28 Chic., Amer. Lib. Ass'n pap. 50 c.

## Altenburg, Edgar

How we inherit. 280p. diags. O [c. '28] N. Y., Holt \$3

Biological explanation of heredity.

## American educational catalog, 1928, The.

O ['28] N. Y., R. R. Bowker Co. \$1

## Ames, Van Meter

Aesthetics of the novel. 230p. (bibl. footnotes) D [c. '28] Chic., Univ. of Chic. Press \$2.50

An analysis of why men enjoy literature and of what literature should give to them.

## Aminoff, Constance Léonie Caroline Borgstrom, friherrina

Arrogance. 383p. D (Torchlight ser. of Napoleonic romances) [c. '28] N. Y., Dutton \$2.50

A picture of Napoleon at the height of his fortunes.

## Anderson, A. G.

Industrial engineering and factory management. 636p. il. O '28 N. Y., Ronald Press \$5

## Anderson, Bp. Charles Palmerston

Twentieth century discipleship: addresses. 56p. D [c. '28] Milwaukee, Morehouse Pub. Co. \$1

## Antevs, Ernest W.

The last glaciation; with special reference to the ice retreat in northeastern North America. 302p. (37p. bibl.) diags., maps D (Shaler memorial ser. Research ser., no. 17) c. N. Y., Amer. Geographical Soc. \$3.50

## Armstrong, Martin Donisthorpe

Lady Hester Stanhope. 180p. (3p. bibl.) front. (por.) D (Representative women) N. Y., Viking Press \$2

The life of "a complete eccentric," niece of William Pitt.

## Ashley, Winston H., comp

Fifty orations that have won prizes in speaking contests; introd. by William Norwood Brigrance. 410p. D [c. '28] N. Y., Noble & Noble \$2

## Asquith, Margot, i. e. Emma Alice Margaret Tennant [Mrs. Herbert Henry Asquith]

Octavia. 331p. D '28 c. '27, '28 N. Y., Stokes \$2.50

About the sparkling Octavia, youngest daughter of the Daventrys and her love affairs with three aristocrats of England.

## Atwood, Wallace Walter, and Thomas, Helen Goss

Home life in far-away lands. 171p. (1p. bibl.) il. (col. front.) maps (pt. col.) Q (The earth and its people, bk. 1) [c. '28] Bost., Ginn 96 c.

The first of a new series of geographies built on the single-cycle plan. It introduces pupils to geography thru a succession of imaginary journeys to the homes of children in distant lands.

## Ayres, Katharine S.

Charcoal sketches; stories of the present-day southern negro. 150p. D '27 Macon, Ga., J. W. Burke Co. \$1

## Bacon, Albion Fellows [Mrs. Hilary E. Bacon]

The path to God. 76p. S c. N. Y., Harper \$1.25

A simple expression of the author's own faith.

## Archer, Ralph Melville

Commercial electrical measuring instruments. 275p. (10p. bibl.) diags. D '28 N. Y., Pitman \$3

## Bentley, A. O., and Driver, J. E.

Analytical tables. 16p. O (Oxford tech. pub'ns) '27 N. Y., Oxford pap. 20 c.

## Blanshard, Paul

Labor in southern cotton mills. 88p. S [c. '27] N. Y., New Republic 25 c.

Book of tax extensions; a manual of computations for municipal officers. 228p. Q c. '28 Portland, Me., George M. Graffam, 202 Masonic Bldg. \$15



- Baltzly, Oliver D.**  
Catechetical evangelization. 249p. O '28  
Burlington, Ia., Lutheran Literary B'd \$3
- Bassett, John Spencer**  
The life of Andrew Jackson; new ed., 2 v.  
in 1. 785p. fronts., maps O '28 N. Y., Mac-  
millan \$4.50
- Bax, Clifford**  
Bianca Cappello. 168p. (1p. bibl.) front.  
(por.) D (Representative women) c. N. Y.,  
Viking Press \$2  
A romantic, adventurous life against the back-  
ground of 16th century Florence.
- Beach, Chandler Belden, and McMurry, Frank  
Morton, eds.**  
The new student's reference work for  
teachers, students and families; 8 v. various p.  
il. (pt. col.), maps O [c.'28] Cleveland, O.,  
S. L. Weedon Co. buck., \$44.75; fab., \$60.50
- Belden, Albert David**  
Following the King; Bible talks for boys  
and girls. 188p. il. D [c.'28] N. Y., Revell  
\$1.50
- Belloc, Hilaire**  
How the Reformation happened. 290p. O  
c. N. Y., McBride \$3.50  
A study by a Catholic historian.
- Beman, Lamar Taney, comp.**  
Selected articles on intervention in Latin  
America. 347p. (18p. bibl.) D (Handbk. ser.,  
ser. II, v. 5) '28 N. Y., H. W. Wilson \$2.40
- Bible**  
The Old Testament in Greek; v. 2, The later  
historical books; pt. 1, I and II Samuel; ed.  
by Alan England Brooke, and others. 209p.  
O '28 N. Y., Macmillan bds. \$7
- Bogoslovsky, Boris B.**  
The technique of controversy; principles of  
dynamic logic. 274p. (bibl. footnotes) O (In-  
ternat'l lib. of psych., phil. and scientific  
method) '28 N. Y., Harcourt \$4
- Boswell, James**  
The hypochondriack; 2 v.; ed. by Margery  
Bailey. 371p., 340p. (bibl. footnotes) il. O c.  
Stanford Univ., Cal., Stanford Univ. Press  
\$15 bxd.  
"Being the seventy essays by the celebrated biog-  
rapher, James Boswell, appearing in the London  
Magazine, from November, 1777, to August, 1783, and  
here first reprinted."
- Brand, Achilles Walter**  
The crimson tides of life [hygiene]. 100p. D  
'28 Los Angeles, Times-Mirror Press \$2
- Bradley, Orlando Charnock**  
Topographical anatomy of the dog; 2nd ed. 280p.  
diags. (pt. col.) O '27 N. Y., Macmillan \$7
- Bragg, Sir William H.**  
The structure of an organic crystal. 32p. il. diags.  
O (Fison memorial lecture, 1928) '28 N. Y., Long-  
mans pap. 50 c.
- Brooks, Keith L.**  
Who is the great "I Am"? 85p. D (c.'27) Los  
Angeles, Biola Bk. Rm. pap. 60 c.
- Cameron, James Robertson**  
Prayers (rev. ed.) 44p. T (Golden galleon 15 c. lib.,  
no. 13) '28 Toronto, Ont., Balk-Preston Co., 319  
Bay St. pap. 15 c.
- Cromie, William James**  
Trapeze, long horse and rope exercises. 61p. il. S  
(Spalding "red cover" ser. of athletic handb'ks, no.  
14R) c. '27 N. Y., Amer. Sports Pub. Co. apply
- Crosby, W. F., comp.**  
Motor boat handbook; new ser. various p. il.  
diags. O [c.'28] N. Y., Motor Boat Pub. Co., 10 E.  
39th St. apply
- Cumberbatch, Elkin Percy**  
Diathermy; 2nd ed. 345p. (bibl. footnotes) il.  
diags. O '28 St. Louis, Mo., C. V. Mosby \$8
- Breslich, Ernst Rudolph, and Stone, Charles  
A.**  
Trigonometry, with tables. 134p. il. diags.  
D [c.'28] Chic., Univ. of Chic. Press \$1.85
- Brown, Harold Haven, and others**  
Applied drawing. 284p. (2p. bibl.) il. (pt.  
col.), diags. O '28 Chic., Mentzer, Bush &  
Co. bds. \$1.50
- Buell, Raymond Leslie**  
The native problem in Africa; 2 v. 1058p.,  
1111p. (66p. bibl.) maps (pt. col.) O c. N. Y.,  
Macmillan \$15 bxd.  
A detailed account of the economic, political, and  
sociological situation in Africa today, by a former  
professor of government at Harvard.
- Burrows, Elizabeth**  
Irene of Tundra Towers. 311p. front. (col.)  
D c. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran  
\$2  
Tundra Towers, on the Yukon, near Bering Sea  
is the home of Irene, who makes it a sanctuary for  
wayfarers. The three strangers who come there bring  
mystery and drama into this story for girls.
- Butterworth, George William**  
A study of church history to the end of the  
thirteenth century. 168p. (bibls.) D '28 Gar-  
den City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran \$1.75
- Byrum, Bessie L.**  
True stories of young Christians. 238p. il.  
D [c.'27] Anderson, Ind., Gospel Trumpet  
Co. \$1
- Calvet, Abbé J.**  
Rome and reunion; tr. by Rev. W. C.  
Turney. 170p. D [c.'28] Milwaukee, More-  
house Pub. Co. \$2
- Campbell, John L., D.D.**  
The Bible under fire; introd. by Robert Dick  
Wilson. 306p. (bibl. footnotes) il. O c. N. Y.,  
Harper \$2.50  
A defense of the Scriptures.
- Carpenter, Harry A., and Wood, George Clay-  
ton**  
Our environment; its relation to us. 297p.  
(3p. bibl.) il. (col. front.) maps diags. D  
(Modern science ser.) [c.'28] Bost., Allyn &  
Bacon \$1.20  
For junior high school classes.
- Case, Robert Ormond**  
Riders of the Grande Ronde. 373p. D c.  
Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran \$2  
A romance of the Northwest.

**Chambers, Frank Pentland**

Cycles of taste; an unacknowledged problem in ancient art and criticism. 148p. O [c.'28] Cambridge, Mass., Harvard \$2

**Chansler, Walter S.**

The river trapper; a treatise on the life of a houseboat dweller and his various river wanderings. 214p. il. D [c.'28] Columbus, O., Hunter-Trader-Trapper Co. \$1

**Chapple, Joe Mitchell**

To Bagdad and back. 303p. il. (pt. col.) O [c.'28] N. Y., Century \$6  
A book of travel in ancient Biblical and Mediterranean lands.

**Chisholm, George Goudle**

Handbook of commercial geography; 11th ed. rev. 840p. (bibl. footnotes) maps, diagrs. O '28 N. Y., Longmans \$7.50

**Coleman, Bessie Blackstone, and others**

The pathway to reading; eighth reader. 447p. (bibls.) il. diagrs. D [c.'28] Newark, N. J., Silver, Burdett \$1.08

**Coleman, Mrs. Satis N.**

Bells, their history, legends, making and uses. 462p. (6p. bibl.) il. S [c.'28] Chic., Rand, McNally \$2

**Conklin, Edwin P.**

Middlesex County [Mass.] and its people; a history; 4 v. 831p., 544p. il. Q '27 c. N. Y., Lewis Hist. Pub. Co. \$37.50 set

**Coolidge-Rask, Marie**

London after midnight; il. with scenes from the photoplay. 267p. il. D [c.'28] N. Y., Grosset 75 c.

**Croft, Edgar William**

"Dad"; a treasure story of the Caribbean Sea. 275p. il., map D ("Big Bill" ser.) '28 Chic., Consolidated Bk. Publishers, 537 S. Dearborn St. \$1

**Crowther, Samuel**

The presidency vs. Hoover. 286p. D c. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran \$2.50  
An analysis of presidential duties for the next term and why Hoover is particularly capable of handling them.

**Davis, William Morris**

The coral reef problem. 601p. (28p. bibl.) il., maps, diagrs O (Special pub'n, no. 9, Shaler memorial ser.) c. N. Y., Amer. Geographical Soc. \$6

**Davison, Edward Lewis**

Some modern poets, and other critical essays. 255p. D c. N. Y., Harper \$3.50

Some of these essays by a young English poet have appeared in English periodicals.

**Denny, Grace Goldena**

Fabrics and how to know them; 3rd ed., rev. 152p. (bibl.) il. S [c.'23-'28] Phil., Lip-pincott \$1.50

**Duly, S. J.**

Grain. 164p. il. O (Oxford tech. pub'ns) '28 N. Y., Oxford \$3

**Dumas, Alexandre**

The three musketeers. 596p. S [c.'28] N. Y., Modern Library flex. fab. 95 c

**Duncan, Mrs. Fannie Casseday**

When Kentucky was young; pen and ink sketches of log cabin days. 246p. il. D c. Louisville, Ky., J. P. Morton & Co., 422 W. Main St.

**Dyson, F.**

Principles of mechanism. 304p. diagrs. O (Oxford tech. pub'ns) '28 N. Y., Oxford \$4.25

**Edgerton, Edward I., and Carpenter, Perry A.**

A second course in the new mathematics. 380p. il., diagrs. D (Junior high school math.) [c.'28] Bost., Allyn & Bacon \$1.20

**Ellis, Wilmot E.**

Bovaryism: the art philosophy of Jules de Gaultier. 40p. D (Univ. of Wash. chapb'ks, no. 16) c. Seattle, Wash., Univ. of Wash. Bk. Store pap. 65 c.

**Ervine, St. John Greer**

Four one-act plays. 95p. D c. N. Y., Macmillan \$1.50  
Contents: The Magnanimous Lover; Progress; Ole George Comes to Tea; She Was No Lady.

**Estornelle, Camille**

Watching at Golgotha [religion]. 87p. D '28 Phil., Dorrance \$1.50

**Exner, Franz**

Krieg und kriminalität in Österreich. 241p. diagrs. O (Economic and social hist. of World War) '27 New Haven, Conn., Yale \$3

**Fairchild, Fred Rogers, and Compton, Ralph Theodore**

Economic problems; a book of selected readings. 621p. (bibl. footnotes) diagrs. O c. N. Y., Macmillan \$2.75

**Farnham, Walter**

Iscariot. 133p. D [c.'28] Bost., Christopher Pub. House \$1.50  
The fall of Judas Iscariot.

**Dau, W. H. T., D.D.**

The testimony of science. 40p. T '28 St. Louis, Mo., Concordia Pub. House pap. 15 c.

**Davies-Woodrow, Constance**

The children's caravan. 40p. T (Golden galleon 15 c. lib., no. 40) c. Toronto, Ont., Balk-Preston Co., 319 Bay St. pap. 15 c.

**DeWaters, Lillian**

The one; a study of the absolute. 209p. S [c.'27]

Stamford, Conn., Author, 118 Forest St. pap., \$1.50; fab., \$2

**Dobson, C. G.**

Builders' book-keeping and costing. 184p. O '27 N. Y., Oxford \$2

**Edwin, Morton R.**

Half a century with tobacco. 126p. S [c.'28] N. Y., Chas. Renard, 21 E. 40th St. pap. \$1

**Eleanore, Sister M.**

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# The Field of Old and Rare Books and Weekly Book Exchange

## CURRENT RARE BOOK NOTES

Frederick M. Hopkins

**A**MBASSADOR MORROW has turned collector and has shown how much can be accomplished in a short time. Since he went to Mexico he has brought together the largest aggregation of material relating to the Mexican oil lands in existence, surpassing any similar collection owned by the Mexican government, or at Washington. The embassy now possesses every important publication upon oil and land laws printed by the Mexican government and has found many obscure works of Spanish Colonial times and of ancient decrees of Kings of Spain promulgating land and mining codes for Mexico. The second-hand bookstores of the City of Mexico have been systematically searched by members of the embassy and many volumes of value discovered. The collection now fills two large rooms and it has been cataloged, its vital information translated, and placed at the disposal of the ambassador. One reason why the embassy has been the place for so many conferences with officials of the Mexican government is that needed information is always available there. When Morrow arrived in the City of Mexico he said: "Before we can settle the oil question we must know as much about it as anybody on earth. Our surest position will be to know more about it than the Mexican government itself." The speed with which this information was acquired has won the admiration of the Mexican officials and taught them a lesson they will not soon forget.

**O**N May 21st at Christie's, London, a First Folio Shakespeare from the library of the late Dean of Llandaff brought \$20,000. A copy of the "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" by Col. Lawrence brought \$1550.

**I**T may not be well known in this country that one of the greatest libraries in the world of the works and of books relating to the Bard of Avon is in Birmingham, England. The Shakespeare Memorial Library in that city contains nearly 20,000 volumes, in 42 languages, and is visited by lovers of the poet from all parts of the world. In the report of the last annual meeting it was stated that 299 volumes had been added, including a translation in Gaelic, a language represented for the first time in the collection. The library was founded in 1864, on the occasion of the tercentenary of the poet's birth. It was destroyed by fire in 1879, and reopened in 1882. A fairly large number of editions are still required to make it fully representative, and among these are about 40 American editions. A large collection of pictures of Shakespeare is one of the features of the collection, and a number of Shakespeareana documents are of interest. One of these bears the signature of Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex. It was given to the library by the illustrator, Charles Edmonds, and bears this inscription: "A Temple devoted to the glory of Shakespeare seems a fit receptacle for a memorial of those whom he delighted to honor while living, and whom he has commemorated to all eternity in his works. The accompanying document therefore, signed by the very hand which our great Bard once kissed with reverence or pressed with affectionate fervor, is offered as a small tribute of that gratitude which should animate all who have benefited from the enlightened liberality of a founder of a library—unique of its kind—enabling all to become wiser and better by offering facilities for a more systematic study of the productions of the Greatest Name in All Literature; by a humble illustrator of the Bard, Charles Edmonds, 1871."



THE First Edition Club, in Bedford Square, London, has just moved into its new home. The opening ceremonies were presided over by ex-King Manuel of Portugal. A little later Sir Frederick Kenyon, director of the British Museum, formally opened the first exhibition in the new exhibition rooms, which made a fine display of private press books of William Morris, Daniel of Oxford, the Dove Press, Cuala, Beaumont, Eragny, Ashendene, Gregnag, Pear Tree, and others. Dr. G. C. Williamson, the chairman, outlined the purpose of the club to interest its members in the writings of the great authors of English literature and to assist in improving the general standard of bookmaking. Its plan and purpose is similar to our Grolier Club which has had great influence on book collecting and bookmaking in this country from its beginning, now more than forty-four years ago. The First Edition Club, founded in 1922 in a room off Pall Mall, now occupies handsome quarters with massive marble staircases, gardens paved with white marble walks, walls trellised in the Italian style, an alcove, and a fountain midst beautiful accacia and sycamore trees. It is expected that the luxurious quarters will attract members sure to be helpful in carrying out the purposes of the club.

THE sale of Part I of stock of the George D. Smith Book Company, Inc., sold in liquidation, at the Anderson Galleries, May 17, brought \$23,163. The outstanding lot of the sale was the original manuscript of Thomas Paine's memorial addressed to James Monroe, the Ambassador to France, who regained his release from imprisonment during the "reign of terror." This manuscript went to Gabriel Wells for \$1,700. A two-page letter from Major André to Colonel Simcoe, preparing the latter for possible events nine days later before his interview with Benedict Arnold, was bought by W. R. Benjamin for \$1,250. A fine collection of seventeen letters and orders signed by Sir William Johnson, covering the whole of his fighting career, went to Mr. Wells for \$1,050. The Clawson copy of John Donne's "Poems," a first edition, brought \$750; a third edition of Shakespeare's "History the Fifth," \$600; a gold medal awarded to Commander Preble for his conquest of Tripoli, \$500; and a

sixteenth century French Horae on vellum, \$300.

THE American Art Association has held its last sale for the season of 1927-1928 and announces that it has had sixty-six art and book sales which brought a total of \$6,229,670. The season of 1926-27, with 84 book and art sales which brought \$6,238,025, still holds the American auction record altho by a small margin. The twenty-four book sales brought a total of \$756,212. Among the high prices were \$18,000 paid by Dr. Rosenbach for the manuscript of Lincoln's speech on "sectionalism"; \$18,300, which an unnamed buyer gave for a set of Dickens's "Pickwick Papers"; \$10,900 by James F. Drake for one of two known copies of Kipling's "Letters of Marque"; \$11,300 by Walter M. Hill for Blake's "Europe, a Prophecy," and \$7,800 by Charles Sessler for an autograph letter by Robert Burns containing an unpublished poem to Chloris.

TO the notable collection of papers of historic American value which now forms part of the many exhibits of the Library of Congress has just been added the Horace Greeley Collection brought together by Rev. F. M. Clendennin, of Chapqua, N. Y. The group includes books, pamphlets, articles by and about the eminent editor, together with books written or edited by him. Among the items most prized are bound files of *The New Yorker*, *The Jeffersonian*, and a set of scrapbooks containing clippings and letters, lectures and notes, all in the handwriting of the famous editor, whose illegibility has become a tradition.

THE death of Edmund Gosse, not only ends the career of a poet and prose writer of distinction, but a collector who had an affection for the great writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and brought together a library that has been well known for more than a quarter of a century. A "Catalogue of a Portion of (his) Library" was published in 1893 and brings a good price when it appears in the auction room. In 1891 a volume entitled "Gossip in a Library" appeared which has been printed in many editions.

# The Weekly Book Exchange

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Adventures of an Elephapnt Hunter. Sutherland.

African Nature Notes & Reminiscences. F. C. Selous.

The Call of the Mountains. Jeffers.

American Game Fishes. By Various Authors. Rand McNally. 1892.

Angling in British Art. W. S. Sparrow.

Barren Ground of Northern Canada. W. Pike.

Bear Hunting in the White Mountains. H. W. Seton-Karr.

Big Game of Africa. R. Tjader.

Big Game Shooting. 2 vols. Ed. H. G. Hutchinson.

In Brush, Sedge & Stubble. D. W. Huntington.  
Camera Adventures in the African Wilds. A. R. Dugmore.

Floating Flies & How to Dress Them. F. M. Halford.

Game of British East Africa. C. H. Stigand.

American Food & Game Fishes. J. J. Evermann. 1922 ed. In green cloth with colored plates.

Game Fishes of the World. C. F. Holder.

Gun & Camera in Southern Africa. H. A. Bryden.

Hunting the Elephant in Africa. C. H. Stigand.

In Africa. J. T. McCutcheon.

In Haunts of Wild Game. F. V. Kirby.

Life Histories of Northern Animals. 2 vols. E. T. Seton.

Lion Hunting in Somaliland. C. J. Melliss.

Modern Sportsman's Gun & Rifle. 2 vols. J. H. Walsh.

My Somali Book. A. H. E. Mosse.

On Safari. Abel Chapman.

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The Pointer & His Predecessors. Wm. Arkwright.

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Irving. Hist. of N. Y. Cruikshank illus.  
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1767.  
Bayley, Harold. The Lost Language of Symbol-  
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Waite, Arthur Edward. Lives of Alchemystical  
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A Beckett, Gilbert. The Comic History of Rome.



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Compound Int. & Annuity Tables. Archer.  
Proc. Am. Phil. Society. Vol. 34. 1895.  
Wyandotte Cave. Crawford Co., Indiana.  
Popular Science Monthly. Vol. 34. 1890.  
Modern Drama in Europe. Storm Jameson.  
People of the Whirlpool. Wright.  
Persian Poets. Ed. Dole Pub. Crowell.  
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 Smith. Hist. of Georgia.  
 Southern Quarterly Review. Jan. to Apr. 1842;  
 July 1842 to 1855; 1856.  
 Troup, Geo. M. Life. Harden.  
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 Wallace Family Genealogy. N. Y. 1902.

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 General Winchester. Frankfort, Kentucky.  
 1842.  
 Baker, Charlotte A. True Stories of New Eng-  
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 C. A. Baker. 1897.  
 Ballou, Adin. History of the Hopedale Com-  
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 1897.  
 Margry, Pierre. Decourvertes et Etablissements  
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 1876-88.  
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 Journal of Army Ordnance Association. Mar.,  
 Apr., 1923; Jan., Feb., 1926; Mar., Apr., 1926.  
 Judson, A. M. A Grammar of Amer. Surnames.  
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Criminal Psychology. Hans Gross. Trans. Hor-  
ace Kallen.  
Criminal Investigation. Hans Gross. Trans.  
Collier. Pub. Sweet. London, 1924.

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Life and Letters of Jane Austen. Austen Leigh.  
Dutton. 1913.

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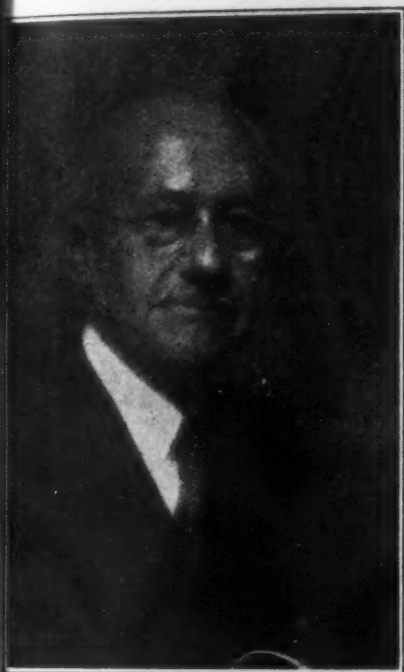


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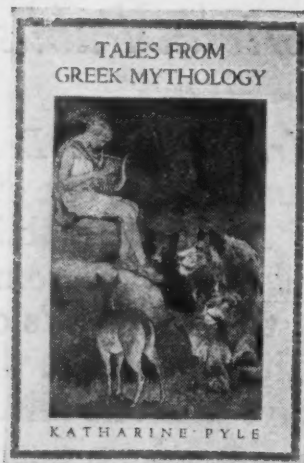


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